

Saturday 10 February 2018

Amateur Photographer



Panasonic 200mm f/2.8
Stunning Leica telephoto prime
for Micro Four Thirds on test

Passionate about photography since 1884

Black & white film essentials

Part 1 of our major guide to **buying
and shooting** film for great results



Just how good is your work?

Why 2018 could be the year
to try for an RPS distinction

Lightroom to the rescue

Rapid-response tools to
fix the most common
photo problems

Meet the Magic Shift Converter • Celebrating Stephen Shore's genius

D850

I AM THE NEXT CHAPTER

*con passione
Rosita Lipari*



ROSITA LIPARI INTRODUCES THE NEW NIKON FULL FRAME D850.

To launch the new Nikon D850, award-winning wedding photographer Rosita Lipari was given the creative freedom to capture the image of her lifetime, shot on the new D850. Thanks to the powerful combination of the 45.7MP FX format back-side illuminated CMOS sensor and the speed of 9*fps shooting, she could tell a story like never before. With ISO 64 to 25600, 153-point AF, 8K time-lapse** and full frame 4K UHD video, now you too can capture your masterpiece. To find out more about the D850, and Rosita's story, follow Nikon on Facebook and YouTube.

*Requires the optional MB-D18 Multi-Power Battery Pack, EN-EL18a/b battery, BL-5 battery cover and MH-26a charger. **Requires Interval Timer settings and 3rd party software.

Nikon ^(th)
100
anniversary





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The great British film revival continues apace, with healthy demand for film from well-established names and start-ups. Black & white film holds a particular fascination for both newbies and old hands – it not only evokes memories of the golden age of post-war documentary and portrait photography, there is also something sensuous and satisfying about the rich tones

and attractive grain of mono film. In the first part of his feature on b&w film photography (page 12), Matt Parry covers the fundamentals, including exposing for film and good film to buy – we're sure you'll find it helpful. Other highlights of this packed issue include a test of Panasonic's stunning 200mm prime (page 41) and an overview of RPS distinctions (page 36) – a great way to find out how good your work really is. **Nigel Atherton, Editor**

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ONLINE PICTURE OF THE WEEK

View from the Sky Garden by Andrea Heribanova

Nikon D800, 28-300mm, 1/50 sec at f/4.5, ISO 1600

This moody city scene was uploaded to our Twitter page using the hashtag #appicoftheweek. It was taken by photographer Andrea Heribanova. She tells us: 'On this day the weather was very dull, but I still decided to go out with my camera. I had a ticket to go up the Sky Garden – a location I visit regularly. I realised when I was up there that I wasn't going to see much in way of a sunset. Luckily some dark clouds rolled in, which made the sky look very dramatic. The problem with the Sky Garden is that tripods are not allowed so it can be a challenge shooting in low light. But I was able to support my camera on the railing and press it against the glass to avoid reflections.'



Win! Each week we choose our favourite picture on Facebook, Instagram, Flickr, Twitter or the reader gallery using #appicoftheweek. PermaJet proudly supports the online picture of the week winner, who will receive a top-quality print of their image on the finest PermaJet paper*. It is important to bring images to life outside the digital sphere, so we encourage everyone to get printing today! Visit www.permajet.com to learn more.



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CD/DVD Send us a disc of high-resolution JPEG, TIFF or PSD images (at least 2480 pixels along its longest length), with a contact sheet, to the address on page 55.
Via our online communities Post your pictures into our Flickr group, Facebook page, Twitter feed, or the gallery on our website. See details above.
Transparencies/prints Well-packaged prints or slides (without glass mounts) should be sent by Special Delivery, with a return SAE, to the address on page 55.



BIG picture

Nikon launches European Wedding Collective, showcasing wedding trends

The European Wedding Collective, which includes photographers and bloggers from the UK, France, Italy and the Czech Republic, has worked together to reveal the most popular wedding traditions in their cultures. Their aim is to show the various different and unique ways that weddings are celebrated in Europe.

In this image, taken in the Czech Republic, the newly married couple sweep up shards of broken plates to symbolise that they will work together in their married life. It was taken by professional wedding photographers Simona Smrčková and Kamil Saliba, using the Nikon D850 and AF-S Nikkor 24-70mm f/2.8G ED lens.

All photographers in the collective use the D850, Nikon's popular 45.4MP full-frame model which was announced in 2017.



© SIMONA SARGENT AND KAMIL SUTERA

NEWS ROUND-UP

The week in brief, edited by
Amy Davies and Hollie Latham Hucker



Ultra-high-speed Vx500 external hard drive

Verbatim's new Vx500 external SSD promises very fast transfer speeds of up to 500MB/s, and it also features a USB 3.1 Generation 2 controller. Weighing just 29g and measuring only 92x29x9mm, it will be available in capacities of 120GB, 240GB and 480GB. Prices start at £89.95 for the 120GB version, rising to £239.95 for the 480GB device.

Outdoor Photographer of the Year winners

Category-winning images from Outdoor Photographer of the Year 2017 have been announced. The overall winner and runner-up will be revealed live on stage at The Photography Show at the NEC, Birmingham, on Saturday, 17 March. Over 18,000 entries were received from more than 60 countries. Go to opoty.co.uk to see all the winning shots.



Launch of world's first 512GB microSD card

Integral has launched the first-ever 512GB microSD card. The memory card format, primarily used in mobile phones, can also be used in cameras that accept standard SD cards with a microSD-to-SD card adapter. Pricing for the extra-large capacity memory card has yet to be announced, but it's not likely to come cheap. It should be available from this month.

Burnett switches to Sony for more speed

The co-founder of New York-based photojournalism agency Contact Press Images, David Burnett, is one of the most prolific photojournalists working today. His decision to switch to Sony's full-frame Alpha 9 and Alpha 7R III was spurred on by the ability to shoot quickly (20fps and 10fps, respectively), without the need for a large body, such as that of the Canon EOS-1D X Mark II.



Words & numbers

Seeing, looking at what
others cannot bear to see,
is what my life as a war
reporter is all about

Sir Don McCullin
British photojournalist (1935-)

19,371

Number of entries
submitted to APOY 2017

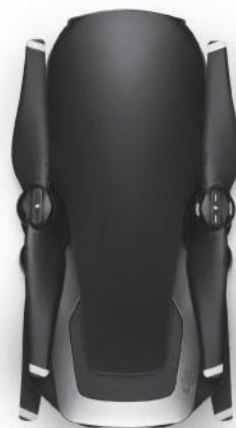
SOURCE: WWW.PHOTOJOURNALISM.COM

Twitter employs AI to crop your images

Social networking site Twitter has announced that auto-cropping of photos, as displayed in previews, will now have a much better look, thanks to the use of artificial intelligence (AI). According to the company, the AI will look for 'salient' regions of photos, that is, the areas of photos that are most likely to be looked at.



DJI introduces ultra-portable Mavic Air



In a sign that drone technology is becoming more accessible than ever before, leading drone manufacturer DJI has announced the ultra-portable Mavic Air. The foldable camera drone delivers an array of high-performance features, which DJI claims gives it greater creative potential than any other commercial drone to date.

It inherits many of the features from drones in the more advanced DJI Mavic Pro series. These include a 4K camera for superior image

quality, new QuickShot modes, and SmartCapture for easier and more intelligent photo and video capturing. FlightAutonomy 2.0 with Advanced Pilot Assistance Systems are designed to ensure a smarter and safer flight.

Weighing just 430gm, the Mavic Air is the most portable DJI drone ever made. It has folding arms and propellers which sit flush against the aerodynamic frame of the drone, making it so compact that it's roughly the same size as a smartphone.

DJI claims that the camera has also been engineered for maximum performance. It includes a recessed three-axis mechanical gimbal which is suspended from dampeners to reduce vibrations and produce steady, smooth shots. The camera itself features a 1/2.3in CMOS sensor with a 24mm (equivalent) f/2.8 lens. The Mavic Air can produce 12MP still images, with new HDR algorithms designed to preserve more highlight and low-light details. It's also possible to capture stabilised 4K video at 30fps. You can record slow-motion video at 120fps by switching to 1,080p (Full HD) shooting.

This is DJI's first drone to include 8GB of onboard storage. There is a microSD card slot for additional storage as well as a newly added USB-C port for quickly exporting captured footage. Other interesting features of the drone include a new Sphere panorama feature, which can capture a 32MP panoramic image in around one minute; a range of new flight modes; and hand gestures which can control the drone.

Available in three colours, red, white and black, the DJI Mavic Air is available now, with a recommended retail price of around £770.



The Mavic Air has SmartCapture for more intelligent photo and video capturing



© AMI VITALE

Super Stage Speaker lineup 2018 announced

THE LINEUP of guest speakers at the Photography Show's Super Stage, taking place at the NEC in Birmingham in March, has been announced.

Some of the world's best-known photographers will be speaking on the main stage, including Ami Vitale, Art Wolfe (pictured above), Brent Stirton, Bruce Davidson, Erik Johansson, Daniel Berehulak, Gered Mankowitz, Jasmine Star, Miles Aldridge and Zed Nelson.

The talks will offer visitors the chance to hear about how these photographers work, their inspirations and their careers to date.

Sessions are £10 each, taking place from Saturday to Tuesday (17-20 March). See photographyshow.com for tickets.



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New improvements for Photoshop CC

Adobe has revealed the latest version of its ever-popular photo-editing software, Photoshop CC. The new version, Photoshop 19.1, brings improvements for photographers who use both Mac and Windows operating systems.

One of the headline new features is the artificial-intelligence-powered Select Subject tool, which was previewed last year. Designed to make subject selections faster than ever, Adobe's 'Sensei' technology automatically selects the prominent subjects in an image with a single click. You can then refine the selection using other tools.

Big news for Windows users is the new High Density Monitor Support. This means that anyone using Photoshop with Windows 10 Creator's Edition can take advantage of a full range of choices for user interface scale



A new tool in Photoshop 19.1 automatically selects subjects

factors from 100% to 400%, giving the Photoshop interface a crisp look, with the correct size no matter the density of your monitor. Photoshop will automatically adjust itself, dependent on your Windows settings.

Improvements have been made to the Select and Mask tool, introducing a decontamination slider to allow the user to control the amount of decontamination applied to an image. This feature was previously available via the

Refine Edge tool. Other new features include better SVG compatibility with Adobe XD, something which designers are likely to appreciate, and improved Microsoft Dial support.

The latest release also fixes a long list of customer-reported bugs (a full list of which can be found online). Photoshop CC is available in a range of packages, and the latest update can now be downloaded from the Creative Cloud app.

Fuji launches waterproof compact

Fujifilm has launched the FinePix XP130, the latest tough camera in the XP series. The camera boasts tough credentials of waterproofing down to 20 metres, shock proofing from a height of 1.75m, freezeproofing and dustproofing.

In addition, the camera is equipped with the latest Bluetooth technology which enables instant image transfer to smartphones and tablets for quick sharing online. In order to use this feature, you'll need a free app which can be downloaded for Android and iOS.

The XP130 has a 16.4MP back-illuminated CMOS sensor, which is paired with a 5x optical zoom lens that boasts 28mm at the wideangle end of the range. There's a 3.0in 920k-dot LCD monitor, while the body of the camera weighs just 209gm.

Designed with underwater or cold



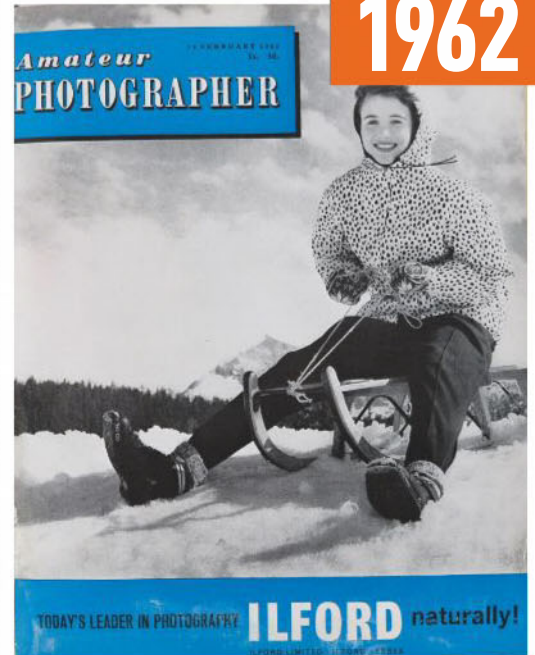
The XP130 is designed for underwater shooting and has an electronic level

shooting in mind, the monitor inhibits light reflection, while the buttons are large and easy to operate, even while wearing gloves. Another new feature for the camera is the addition of an electronic level.

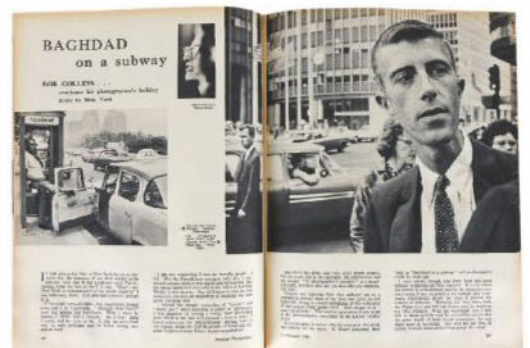
Set to be available from February, the XP130 has a retail price of around £199.

Back in the day

A wander through the AP archive. This week we pay a visit to 14 February 1962



THOSE were the days – pre-global warming, there was proper snow everywhere for the missus to go sledging. Winter wonderland aside, the then editor of AP had more letters after his name than Stephen Hawking. We're talking B.Sc, M.Sc, Hon. FRPS, D.G.Ph... we feel like turnips in comparison to such erudition (you can't get the staff these days). Mr Sowerby the editor also used big words like 'propitious' and 'redolent' in his editorial, so it was clearly a clever man who wrote it. Inside the rest of the issue there were lots of confident-sounding features; check out 'Blueprint for Black and White Photos' by Neville Maude, while the romantically named 'Ricardo' – Richard to his mum – had plenty of tips for beginners. George L Wakefield also tried out a home-made enlarger (the 60s had only just started, so people didn't get out much) and there was lots about cine photography, nearly half the magazine in fact. There's also an interesting documentary piece on Baghdad, except it's not Baghdad, it's New York. Confused? We were. More trips down memory lane next week.



This AP feature is not necessarily about Baghdad...

For the latest news visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk



Viewpoint David Healey

Will digital-native teenagers be able to cope with the waiting time in analogue photography?

I entered the school's disused darkroom. Nobody knew precisely when it was last used. I found a well-designed workspace, a large darkroom sink, five rather elderly enlargers, cupboards containing assorted processing equipment, some 5x7 sheet film, various vintages of Ilford Multigrade paper, and even a hand-cranked Paterson Thermo-Drum for colour print processing – quite ambitious for a school darkroom. I also expected a box of Pentax K1000s: the workhorse school film camera of the 1980s, but alas, not.

So should we scrap it or renovate it? Might art students take to silver-based imaging? It takes vision, sacrifice and passion to create, or recreate. And money in education (especially for the creative arts) is in very short supply: replacement 10x8 safelight filters are very expensive.

The renaissance has presented some technical challenges; my thanks to the Film and Darkroom User forum member who provided the missing negative carrier for the fibre-optic Vivitar VI enlarger. We found a lens board on eBay. Now if only we can find some retaining screws.

Getting students interested

The support of the leadership and enthusiasm and willingness of the art teacher Sophie and technician Ginny to learn how to shoot film, develop, print and run a darkroom in record time made it

easy. But would the students also share our enthusiasm?

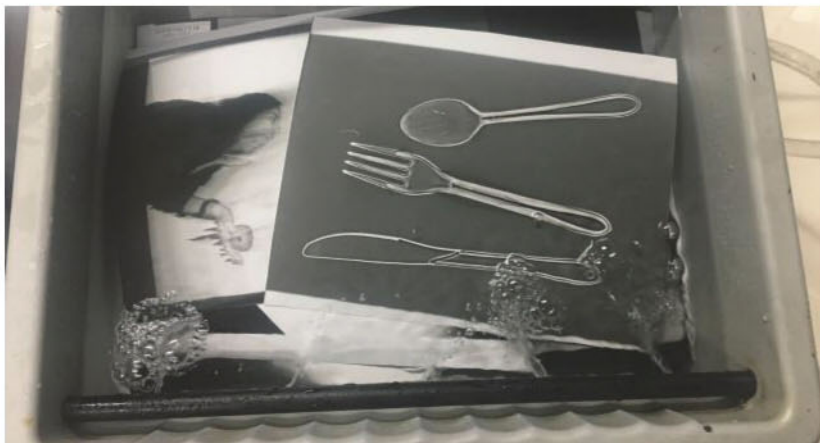
We got maintenance to clean, drill and repair the room. We decluttered it and checked the blackout blinds for pinholes. The photo-education supplier Keyphoto helped us source some spares, and supplied the chemistry we needed. Ilford's 'How to' videos helped my colleagues understand analogue processes. Sophie practised loading film into a spiral while watching *The Great British Bake-off*. Staff from other departments volunteered their expertise and donated old film and a camera, and wanted to know when they could once again process their own film. Ginny tested all the paper for fogging. We mixed the chemicals, and the first image emerged out of the developer.

As I demonstrated how to make a photogram, Sophie announced: 'I'm bringing the students in on Thursday.'

So what did five A-level Art students make of it? 'Very interesting and enjoyable,' said one. 'It's a whole new set of skills that I hope to make use of in my A-level Art course,' said another.

In the end it was worth it – digital natives have encountered negatives, and enjoyed the experience.

David Healey ARPS tutors photography at King Edward VI Aston School, and is chairman of the RPS's Analogue Group at whose recent AGM Ian Beesley Hon FRPS spoke.



Experimental work produced by Sixth Form Art students and staff in the revived darkroom

Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the address on page 55 and win a year's digital subscription to AP, worth £79.99

In next week's issue

On sale Tuesday 13 February



Get your best-ever prints

Matthew Richards reveals how to best translate what you see on-screen to paper



Sleepless in Senja

Matty Graham tests the Canon EOS 5D Mk IV on a trip to the Norwegian fjords

Reikan FoCal Pro

Jon Devo tries out this AF calibration software for Canon and Nikon DSLRs

Give your photos wings

Learn about the basics of drone photography and how to get started

Repeat Winner of the TIPA Award

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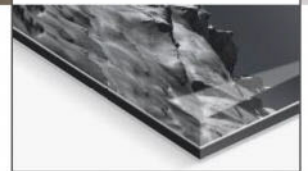


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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Not a whole lotta shakin'

As a keen amateur photographer, I enjoyed reading David Tipling's article on garden bird photography ('On the wing' in AP 20 January 2018). Aside from the tips, I was very impressed by the tack-sharp focus on all the images. From an accomplished photographer, such sharpness is not surprising. However, one thing puzzles me. One of the numerous 'rules of thumb' in photography concerns image blurring as a result of camera shake. Everyone 'knows' that, to avoid such blurring of a stationary subject, the exposure time in seconds must not exceed the reciprocal of the effective focal length in millimetres. So, for example, if effective focal length is 500mm, then the exposure time should not exceed 1/500th of a second. Nobody seems to have told David! Look at the numbers for the thrush, robin and, in particular, the blackbird – 400mm at 1/80th of a second. This is a factor of 5 adrift from the 'rule'; yet it's very sharp. Can David Tipling keep super-humanly still? Does the vibration compensation capability of modern lenses allow the rule to be severely bent, or are there caveats to the rule for pseudo-stationary subjects? I've heard that in-lens vibration compensation can be counter-productive, in some circumstances, for a tripod-mounted system. Are you able to elucidate? **Bob Berrisford**

We can indeed. Watch out for a forthcoming major technical feature on image stabilisation in the 3 March 2018 issue – **Geoff Harris, deputy editor**



AP 20 January has an article on garden bird photography

Win!

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Street justice

I am an amateur photographer and student and have followed your magazine for a couple of years now. I recently watched a YouTube video of a security man asking a photographer not to photograph a private property (a factory) and the photographer

stating he could photograph private property from public land (the photographer was standing on the pavement at the factory's entrance). This piqued my interest and after searching the internet and UK government website and legislation, I can find no mention in the law on photography in a public

space. I assume most situations have no direct coverage in law and are based on case law and/or the data protection act. Could you offer an opinion?

Josh Gooding

The point is, there are no laws in the statute books **FORBIDDING** photography of private property from a public place. The relevant laws could do with being more specific in their language, but I'm guessing the government has a few other legislative priorities at the moment. Thanks for mentioning our guide to street photography and the law in your email, which other readers can find at <http://bit.ly/aplawtips>. Always get pro advice if you have specific questions on your legal rights – **Geoff Harris, deputy editor**

Gone west

In your article 'How low can you go?' (AP 27 January) you said Ardnamurchan Lighthouse is the most westerly point in Scotland. This is incorrect as this point is the most westerly point on the Scottish mainland. There are of course the Hebridean Islands quite a long way to the west of Ardnamurchan. I still don't know how you produce such an amazing magazine on a weekly basis. Fantastic work.

Robin Law

Pro mirrorless musing

In his verdict on the Panasonic Lumix G9 (AP 27 January), Michael Topham said: 'It doesn't feel quite as refined as a professional mirrorless camera...' I have been a keen amateur photographer for over 50 years, loyal to Canon for more than 20 and an EOS 1DX user for the past five. However, weight is becoming an issue and, for the first time ever, I am considering going mirrorless. My main objective for the

upcoming Photography Show is to evaluate the current offerings from Fujifilm, Olympus, Panasonic and Sony. Could you provide a list of what you consider 'professional' mirrorless cameras?

Mike Dodman

While 'professional' is a somewhat nebulous term for describing cameras, we'd consider the current crop of professional mirrorless cameras to include the Fujifilm X-T2 and X-Pro2; Leica SL; Olympus OM-D E-M1 Mark II; and Sony Alpha 7R II, 7R III, 7S II and Alpha 9. Panasonic's GH5 and GH5S also probably belong on the list, although they're of particular interest for videographers – **Andy Westlake, technical editor**

Scan fan

I enjoy digital photography, but now and again, I turn to my archive of film negatives and get scanning. Thought my old Nikon scanner might no longer be PC-compatible or up to the job, but I was wrong on both counts. The latest VueScan software gets details out of negatives I've never achieved before, and I got some high-quality prints. However the real job of scanning, in my book, is discovering hidden gems – that final frame on the end of the roll that was ignored when I had my films processed commercially because it was incomplete. Several times I've discovered images I've never seen before. This is my recommendation to AP readers: check the last never-printed half-image.

John Lees ARPS

Saucy scenics

Inspired by Geoff's review of *Masters of Landscape Photography* I purchased the book and sat down to read it, starting with the Foreword. The opening sentence is: 'We live in a golden age of Landscape Pornography.' I am

definitely looking forward to reading more! You might well have generated a lot more sales had you mentioned this.

Barry Lowe

Colourful language indeed, and no typo. Thanks for pointing this out – Geoff Harris, deputy editor



The Sony Alpha 7R II falls into the category of professional mirrorless cameras

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Black & white

film essentials

Whether you are new to 35mm film photography or want to get back into it, **Matt Parry** explains the key considerations for shooting and developing mono in 2018

A compact 35mm camera is a cheap and fun way to document your home town and reintroduce yourself to film.
Middlewich, UK
Olympus XA3, Ilford Delta 400



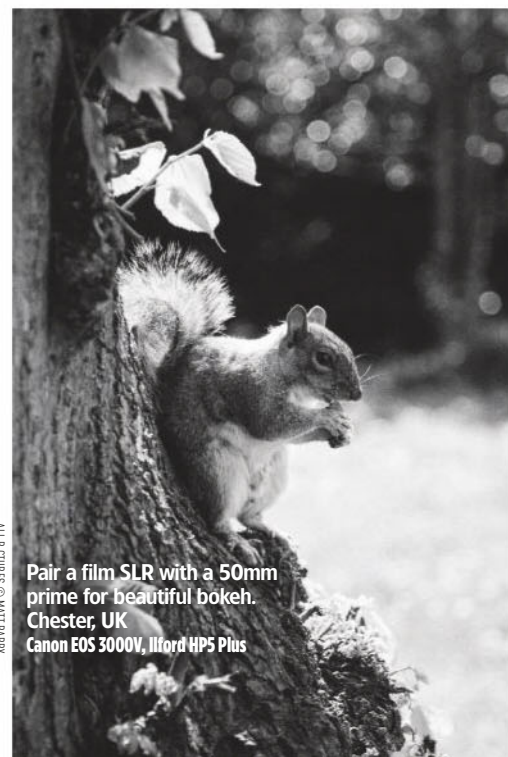
Matt Parry

Matt Parry is an award-winning travel photographer and a regular contributor to magazines and blogs. He is also the marketing manager for Harman Technology Limited

(Ilford Photo), a role that reignited his love for film photography. See more of Matt's pictures at www.mattparryphotography.com.

In the heyday of film there were large manufacturers operating all across the globe. When digital photography appeared on the scene at the outset of the new millennium, the sales of film declined, resulting in some established manufacturers going out of business while others drastically changed their business model. Fast forward to 2018, however, and film has bounced back in a big way. This 'awakening' has been taking place over several years and all over the globe. Perhaps spurred on by the curiosity of a younger generation raised on digital, we are seeing an increasing number of people discovering or rediscovering this fabulous format.

The indicators of growth are not just in film sales. Darkrooms have started reappearing in homes and colleges. A successful Kickstarter campaign by Reflex in 2017 could herald the first newly designed 35mm camera in many years, and scanned film shots are appearing with increasing regularity on social media – all of which means there are a growing number of people shooting on film, with black & white film particularly enjoying a real surge in popularity. ➤



Pair a film SLR with a 50mm prime for beautiful bokeh.
Chester, UK
Canon EOS 3000V, Ilford HP5 Plus

ALL PICTURES © MATT PARRY



Specialist black & white films

C-41 black & white film

Lab-processing options are more limited for black & white film than for colour. One exception is the Ilford XP2 Super, an ISO 400 chromogenic film that can make use of the wide network of C-41 colour-processing labs. It also has the unique ability to be shot at different speeds between ISO 50 and 800 on the same roll and still be processed as standard. It can utilise Digital ICE technology, making it perfect for scanning. It can be purchased from over a hundred UK dealers (www.ilfordphoto.com/storelocator) or via the ilfordphoto.com website.

Infrared film

The infrared effect is particularly popular with black & white landscape photographers, because the skies become a deep black and green vegetation becomes a snow-like white. Options include the Rollei Infrared 400 and Ilford SFX 200. Both films can be used with colour filters to adjust the infrared effect. Rollei infrared film can be purchased via a number of UK stockists or by visiting www.macodirect.de/en/film/infrared-films/

Washi Film

A niche option is the ISO 25 'W' film by Film Washi – 'the world's smallest film company'. This black & white film is handcrafted on traditional Japanese Kozo paper for a very unique look. For a list of retailers visit: filmwashi.com/en/order/.

High ISO film

Most black & white film speeds sit between ISO 50 (slow) and 400 (fast). If you shoot handheld in low light where flash is not practical or if you shoot sport and need to freeze the action, then ISO 400 will not cut it. Following the discontinuation of Kodak's T-Max 3200 in 2012, the only true ultra-fast black & white film on the market is the Ilford Delta Professional 3200. The alternative is to 'push' your film. This is when you shoot the film at a different speed than its rated ISO value. For example, HP5 Plus can be comfortably pushed beyond 3200.

The more a film is pushed the more evident the grain is – however, unlike noise, film grain retains an aesthetic quality that adds a unique and identifiable characteristic to film.



Thinking in black & white

Shooting black & white film is essentially a creative and artistic choice. It requires a certain mindset: the ability to visualise how the scene or subject will look absent of colour. Unlike a digital image, the decision to shoot in black & white has to be a conscious, upfront commitment – one that cannot be reversed.

Without colour in an image it is easier to strip a scene back to its basic elements to showcase and capture light. Photographers therefore have the opportunity to utilise composition, space, shapes, lines and objects in a raw and powerful manner – not how they are in truth, but how they are visualised, interpreted and controlled. The choice of film, filters, processing techniques and paper all then play their part in turning that vision into reality.

So how does shooting black & white film influence your exposure decisions? The dynamic range of black & white film is excellent and is sufficient to achieve incredible images with tremendous detail, while the metering capabilities of 35mm cameras are perfectly capable of reading

the light to accurately expose an image. Add in the exposure latitude of the film (how much you can over or underexpose the film and still get a decent image) and you are well on your way to taking images you can be proud of.

A number of 35mm film cameras have a built-in through-the-lens (TTL) light meter that allows you to set your aperture or shutter speed to give a correct exposure based on the ISO of the film and the available light. While this can get challenged in more extreme bright, low-light or high-contrast scenes it will generally give you an accurate exposure.

Some older 35mm cameras may not include a light meter. In these cases, you can use a handheld meter to take a reading of the scene and adjust your camera settings to compensate. If you have no light meter then the classic 'sunny 16 rule' should help give you a reasonably accurate exposure. As the name suggests, on a sunny day use an f-stop of f/16 while setting your shutter speed to the equivalent of your film's ISO speed, that is, an FP4 ISO 125 film would use a shutter speed of 1/125. Don't worry though

The dreamy quality of black & white film, enhanced by the grain.
Northwich, UK
Canon EOS 5, Ilford Delta 400



because there are also equivalent rules for light conditions more applicable to our British weather!

Think about film and filter choice too. Film stocks can respond differently to light and as such will manage exposure differently. Some may produce flat, evenly toned images while others offer more contrast and tonal range. The developer and development times used can also affect the exposure, contrast and tones of the negative. The sky on a sunny or flat overcast day can sacrifice detail to the rest of the image as it is reproduced in lighter tones of grey. Using a yellow, orange or red filter can darken the sky, help the clouds pop and introduce more detail to create a better-balanced and exposed image. An ND grad can also be used to hold back light from the sky.

Black & white film brands

Ilford: Despite some ups and downs, Ilford remains the only manufacturer of film in the UK and continues to offer the broadest range of black & white options on the market, with eight different Ilford 35mm black & white films including the hugely popular HP5 Plus. Harman technology also manufactures two Kentmere black & white films.

Kodak: When Eastman Kodak famously filed for bankruptcy in 2012, partly owing to declining sales of film, the film business was taken over by Kodak Alaris, a company owned by the UK Kodak Pension Plan. Kodak Alaris retains close ties with Kodak in Rochester, USA, where the film is still manufactured alongside the latter's motion picture film. Kodak Alaris offers three popular black & white films: T-Max 100, T-Max 400 and Tri-X 400. ➤

'If you have no light meter then the classic "sunny 16 rule" should help give you a reasonably accurate exposure'

Black & white film brings out the details in the landscape.
Llyn Idwal, UK
Canon EOS 3000V,
Ilford Delta 400



Black & white film is suitable for many genres.
Kotor, Montenegro
Canon EOS 3000V, Ilford HP5 Plus

Technique BLACK AND WHITE ESSENTIALS

➤ **Fujifilm:** Japan's big manufacturer of film has embraced digital and, thanks to having its fingers in other pies, was never dependent on film sales. Fujifilm is still heavily involved in analogue photography through its hugely successful Instax line and continues to produce some of its popular film emulsions, including Neopan 100 Acros black & white film. However the company is rumoured to be reducing its range of film stocks as it plans to focus its business elsewhere.

In addition, there are a number of other film brands offering black & white film including Adox, Agfa, Foma, Lomography and Rollei. Moreover, indicative of the growth in film, the past couple of years has seen more recent options released or announced by CineStill, Ferrania, Film Washi, Japan Camera Hunter, Kosmo Foto, Lucky and Oriental.

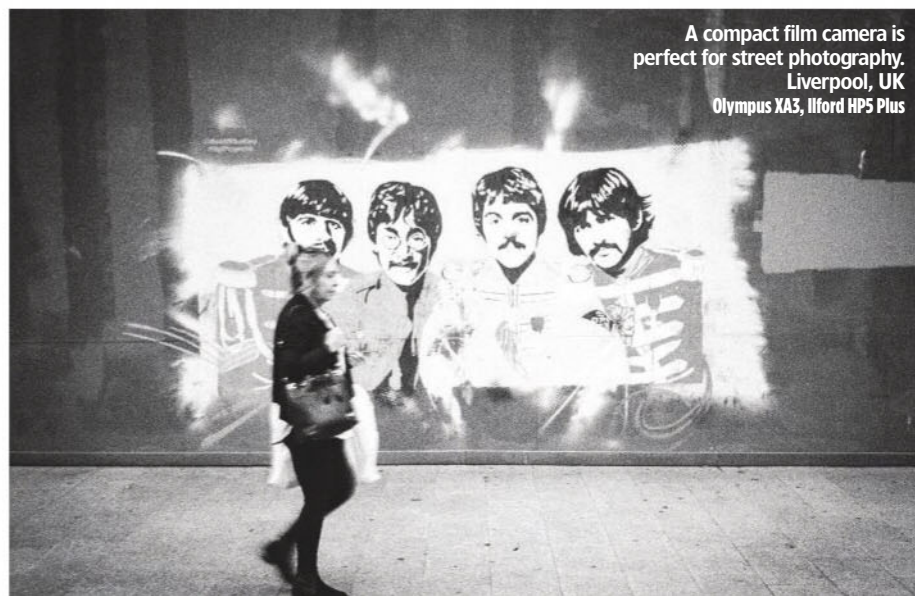
Choosing a film

All this choice is a good thing, but it can be daunting when faced with many options. How do you know which one is right for you, and what are the differences between them? When it comes to photography many things boil down to personal preference. Film is no different and attributes such as speed, brand, grain structure and exposure latitude can all influence your decision.

Speed: Most commonly measured as ISO (or ASA, EI, DIN), this is the film's sensitivity to light. The lower the ISO number, the slower the film – ISO 100 is a slower film than ISO 400. What and where you shoot will determine the film speed you need – that is, the amount of available light combined with the subject matter. As a general rule, if the light is good then a low ISO film should be sufficient, while low light will generally require a fast (high ISO) film. Most black & white films fall into the ISO 50 to 400 range, with ISO 400 being the most common speed and ideal for the majority of applications and genres.



The dynamic range of 35mm black & white film can match most modern digital cameras.
Liverpool, UK
Olympus XA3, Ilford HP5 Plus



A compact film camera is perfect for street photography.
Liverpool, UK
Olympus XA3, Ilford HP5 Plus

Brand: Much like camera choice, photographers often have a preference when it comes to film brands. This is partly due to familiarity, but there is also a practical reason. If you are shooting a long-term project or prefer the look of a certain film then you want the consistency and reassurance of that film stock. Many enjoy experimenting with different films as well as alternate film based on shooting conditions, price or availability.

Grain structure: Grain is an inherent feature of film photography. As a general rule slower speed films have a finer grain structure (when shot at their recommended ISO), while visible grain is increased as a film is pushed. There are a number of fine grain black &



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Colourful cars are reproduced as various shades of grey.
Havana, Cuba
Nikon F55, Ilford Delta 400



➤ white film options available such as Ilford's Pan F Plus, Delta 100 and 400, Fujifilm's Acros 100, or Kodak's T-Max 100 or 400. The most popular black & white films, Ilford HP5 Plus and Kodak Tri-X, are renowned for their grain. Both these long-established films have beautiful grain structures, punchy contrast and superb tonal ranges.

Exposure latitude: A film with good exposure latitude offers a greater margin

of exposure error within which a good or even great image is still produced. As they are more forgiving, these films are perfect for beginners, but they are equally used by seasoned professionals for their many other qualities.

Push/Pull: Films can often be pushed or pulled to varying degrees. In other words they can be shot at a different speed to their nominal ISO rating. For example, an ISO 400 film can be made

faster by shooting at ISO 1600. When pushing or pulling a film it also needs to be processed for the speed at which it is shot, that is, if pushed it will need a longer development time. After shooting a pulled/pushed film always note the speed on the film cassette as a reminder before processing, and remember that film can only be processed based on one speed, so the whole roll should be shot at that speed.

AP



Processing your own film helps mitigate costs

Processing film Your options

Lab processing

Black & white and colour films are not processed in the same way. While most high-street processing services will know this, your film will be ruined if it is processed using a C-41 colour process (with the exception of the Ilford XP2 Super). Most services will send your film to a specialist black & white processing lab, many of which are directly available, including harmanlab.com. You can search for labs in Ilford Photo's locator: www.ilfordphoto.com/storelocator. Alternatively you can search Emulsive's lab locator: emulsive.org/articles/global-film-lab-map.

Home processing

For those with access to a darkroom, black & white film is far easier to develop than colour, and offers a quicker and more economical option than lab processing. There are a range of developers, stop baths and fixers, and many online guides. Powder developers tend to be the most economical, while liquid developers are the easiest to start with. When removing a film from its cassette and loading it onto a spiral prior to development, this has to be done in complete darkness, so you need a light-tight space. We will cover this process in more detail in Part 2 of this article – in the 10 March issue.

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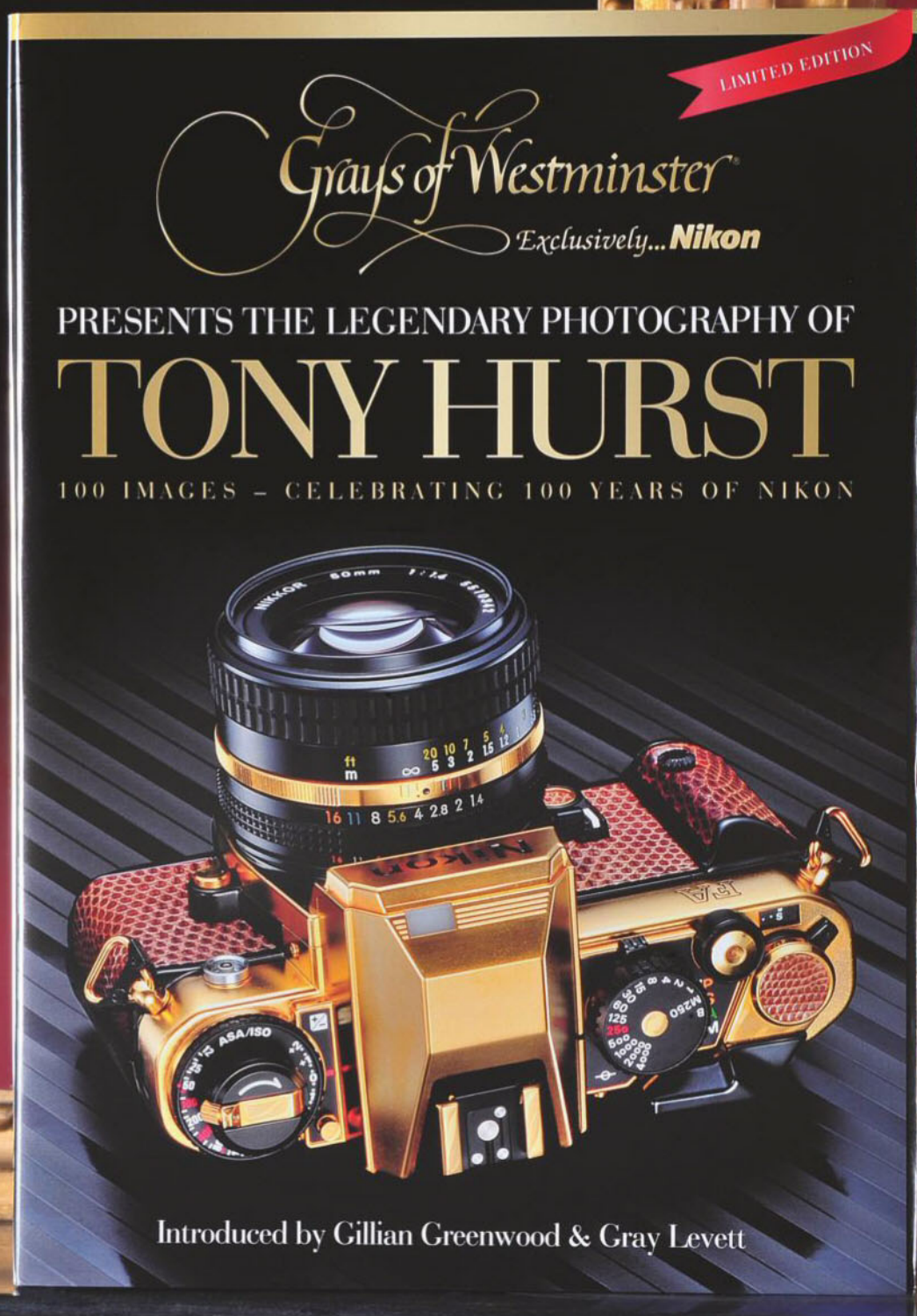
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Lightroom tips

Speedy photo fixes

Discover how to correct all manner of photo problems with these essential Lightroom techniques. **James Paterson** explains all



Reveal lost detail in the shadows to brighten a scene

2 Save underexposed images

This is where shooting in raw really helps, as raws retain greater detail in the shadows. We can pull out the detail using a combination of the Exposure, Shadows and Blacks sliders in the Basic panel. Correcting underexposure will inevitably emphasise noise, so head to the Details panel and use the Noise Luminance slider to combat this.

3 Correct an unbalanced exposure

Sometimes an image is neither here nor there – the shadows are too dark, the highlights blown out. Here's where local adjustments can fix things. Use the Exposure slider to pull detail out of the shadows, switch to the Adjustment Brush or Graduated Filter and selectively darken the highlights for a balanced frame.

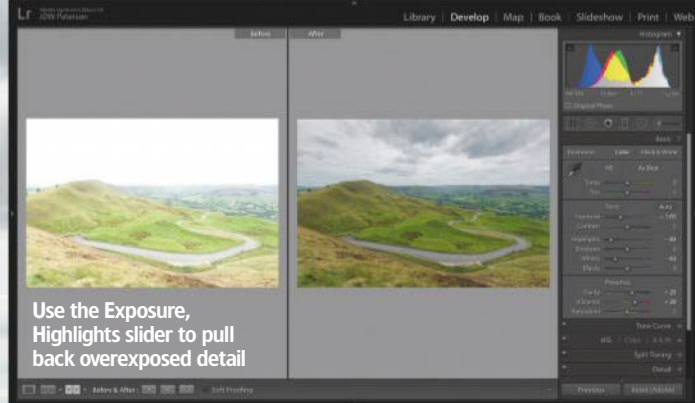


4 Hide distractions

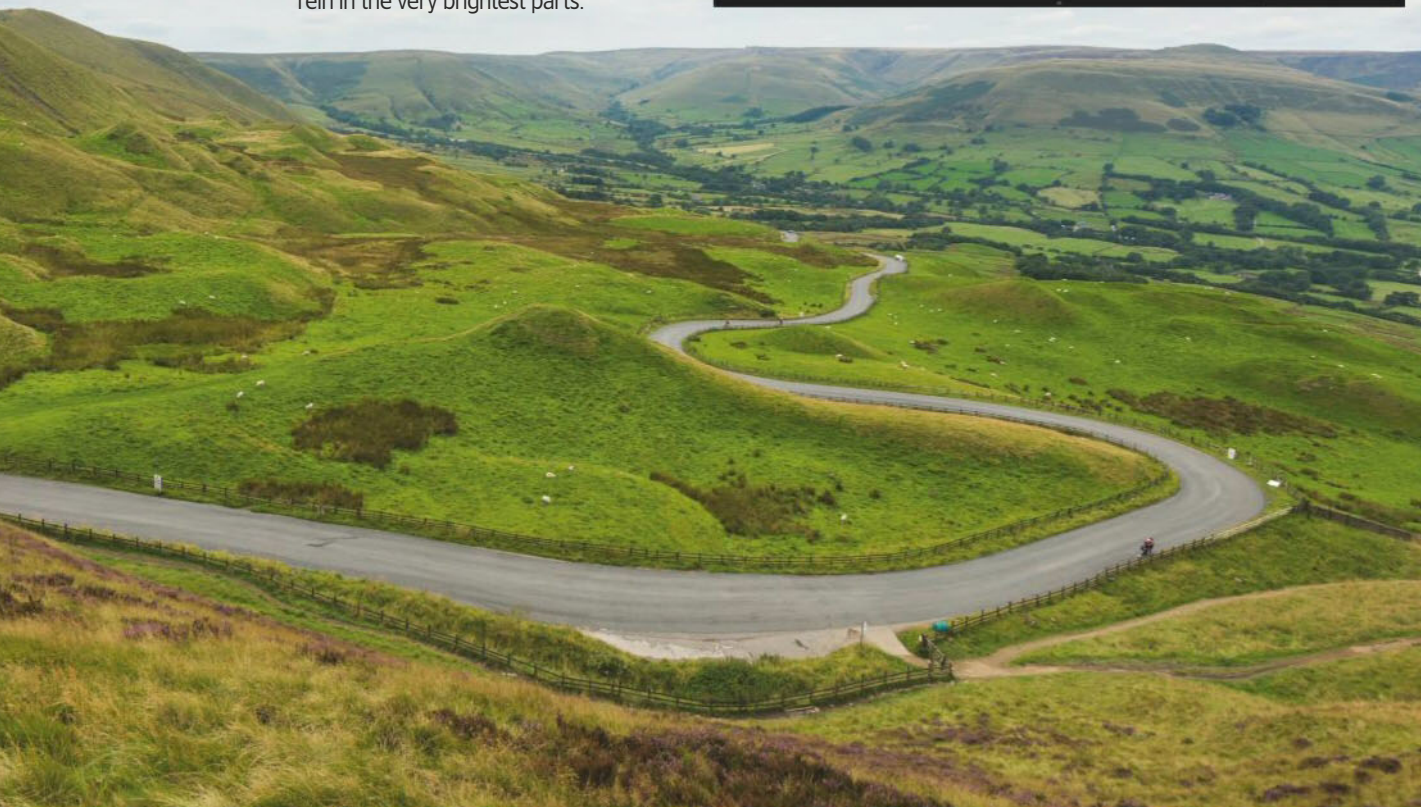
While Lightroom can't match Photoshop CC in the retouching department, it does offer one excellent tool – the Spot Removal tool. Set it to Heal, then paint over distracting details and sensor marks to remove them. It works best on small marks against detailless surroundings, like a spot in a sky.



1 Fix overexposed photos Lightroom offers a range of tonal tools for correcting overexposure, but which should you use? Begin in the Develop Module's Basic panel and tweak exposure to darken the image. Next move on to the Highlights slider, which lets you pull back detail. Finally, adjust the Whites slider to rein in the very brightest parts.

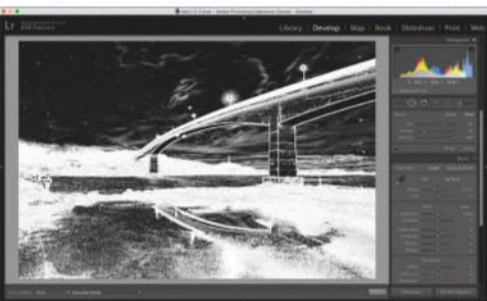


Use the Exposure, Highlights slider to pull back overexposed detail

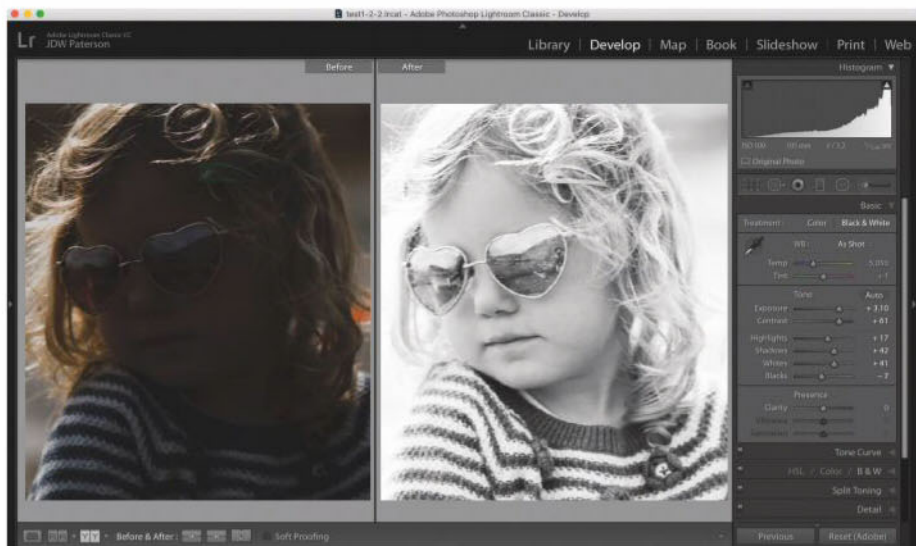


5 Check for clipping When pixels are 'clipped' to black & white it means they are entirely lacking in detail, which is usually to be avoided. You can check for clipped pixels by holding Alt while dragging either the Whites or Blacks sliders. Use the sliders to claw back a small amount of clipping.

6 Oust sensor marks When assessing an image for sensor marks, there's a useful feature within the Spot Removal tool called 'Visualise Spots'. You'll find it at the bottom of the screen when the tool is selected. A slider lets you set a threshold, so you can fine-tune it to show any sensor marks, then heal with the Spot Removal tool.



Use Visualise Spots to reveal sensor marks



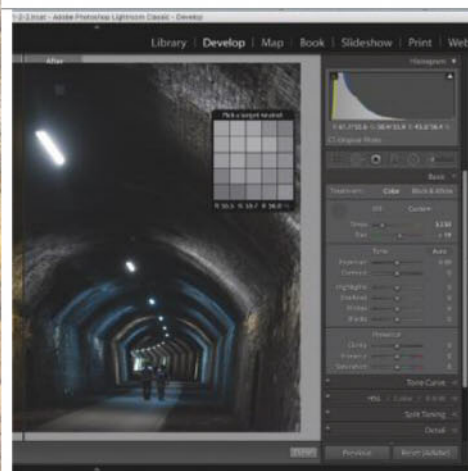
7 If all else fails... In extreme cases of underexposure, when all else fails try converting your image to black & white. Without colour, you'll find you can pull out more detail in areas that are underexposed. Of course, this will lead to increased image noise, but you can get away with calling it 'arty grain' in mono.

8 Quickly remove wires It's sometimes hard to avoid including telegraph wires in your landscapes, but they are easily removed in Lightroom with the Spot Removal tool. Use the] and [keys to resize the tip so that it's slightly wider than the wire, then click at one end, hold Shift and click along the line to heal in a straight line. Keep shift-clicking to remove the entire wire.

Technique



You can easily alter white balance when you shoot in raw



10 Correct colour casts

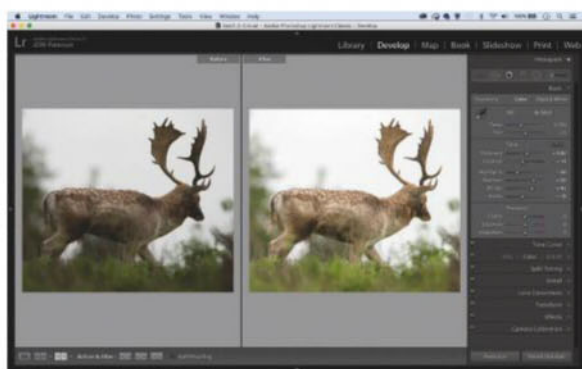
Sometimes your camera's white balance will go awry, but the resulting colour casts are easily fixed in Lightroom (especially if you shoot in raw, as you can alter the white balance afterwards just as if you'd done so beforehand). Simply grab the White Balance tool from beside the Temp and Tint sliders, and click over a neutral grey point in the image.

11 Match panorama frames

When shooting a panorama it's best to lock your exposure or use manual exposure so that it stays consistent across the set. However, if there are inconsistencies then a Lightroom feature can help you out. Cmd/Ctrl+click to select multiple frames, then go to Settings>Match total exposures.

9 Heal multiple marks

If you have an entire set of photos that are plagued by a recurring sensor mark then it's easily removed if the mark is in the same spot throughout. First paint over it with the Spot Removal tool in one image. Next highlight all the others, click the Sync button, check Spot Removal and hit Sync.



12 Try intelligent Auto

The latest Lightroom Classic update includes a dramatically improved Auto button (found in the Develop Module's Basic panel). Auto now employs Sensei – Adobe's machine-learning technology – to analyse image content when applying a fix. It's much better than before, and a good way to begin correcting lifeless tones or exposure mishaps.



Lightroom can detect wonky horizons and correct them

13 Level wonky horizons

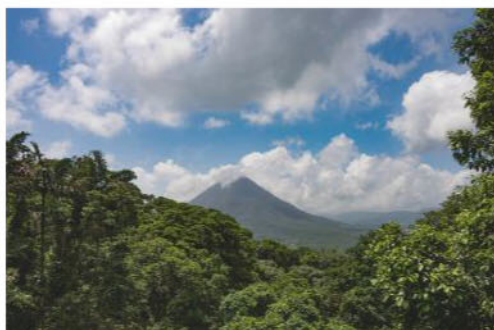
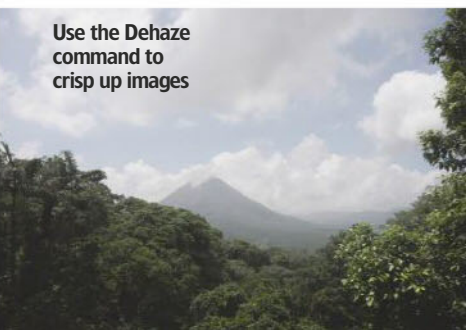
Go to the Transform panel and click on Level or Auto and Lightroom will detect and correct it. To use auto-level while cropping, use the Auto button in the crop tool settings. Or hit A for the level tool and drag a line through the image manually.

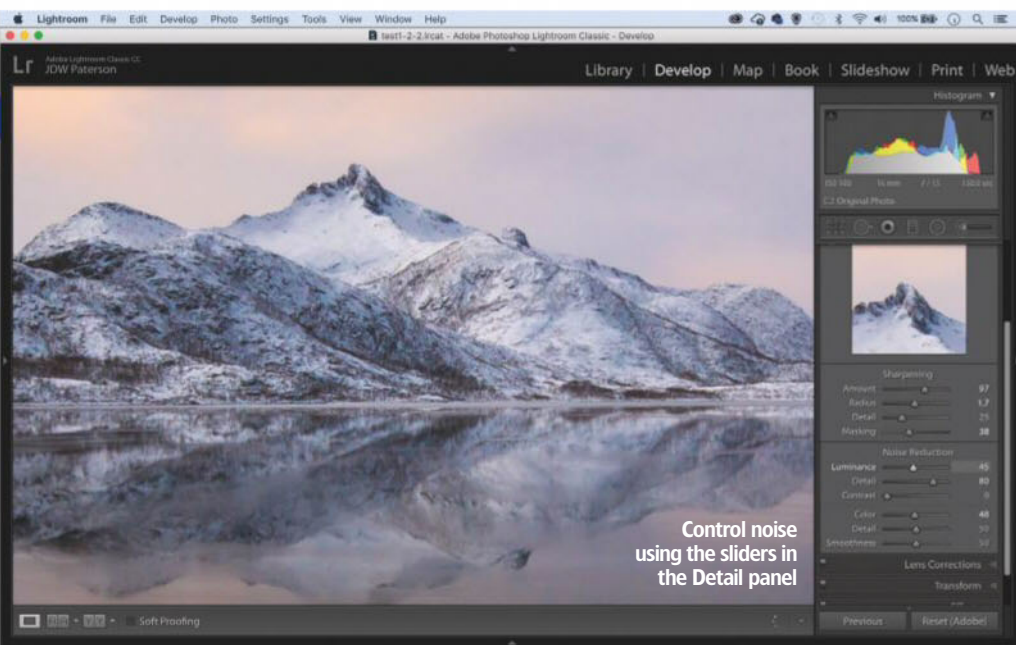


14 Cut through haze

If landscapes are hazy and lack contrast, the Dehaze command can help cut through the atmospheric haze and crisp up details. It's found within the Effects panel. After applying Dehaze the shadow tones may darken too much. If this happens try lifting the Shadows slider in the Basic panel.

Use the Dehaze command to crisp up images



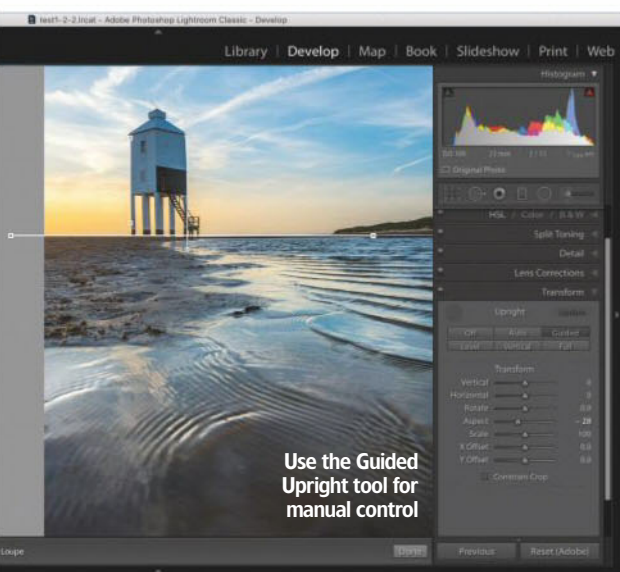
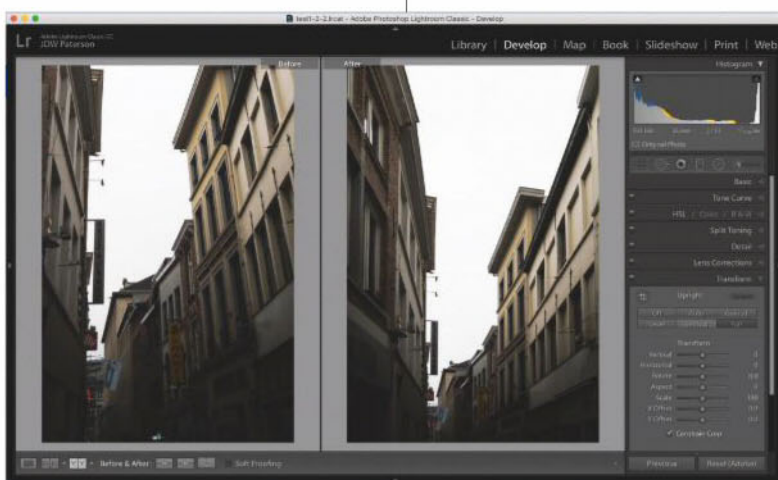


15 Fix noisy photos If your image is plagued by noise then the best fix is Lightroom's Detail panel. Use the Noise Luminance slider to reduce grainy noise, then use the Detail slider to fine-tune how the noise reduction softens details and contrast. Finally, if necessary use the Color noise sliders to remove blotchy colour noise.

16 Correct converging verticals If you shoot with the camera angled upwards then vertical lines may appear to converge towards the centre, especially with wideangle lenses. You can counteract this with Lightroom's Transform panel. Click the Auto, Vertical and Full buttons. If these fail, try the Guided Upright tool (see tip 19).

17 Fix distortion and fringing

All lenses suffer from distortion and chromatic aberration to some extent, but these are an easy fix. Go to the Lens Correction panel and check both 'Remove Chromatic Aberration' and 'Enable Lens Corrections'. You can have these turned on by default – check both boxes then hold Alt and click the 'Set Default' button.

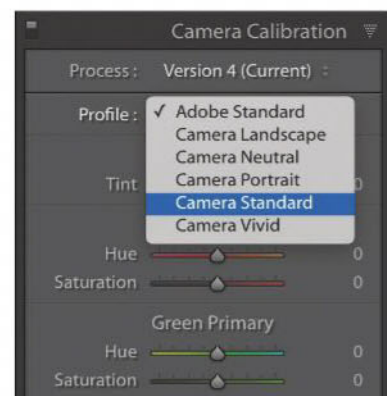
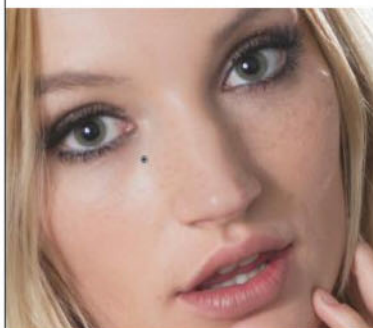


19 Guided Upright

If the other Upright tools are unable to automatically correct distortion and converging verticals in your image, then the Guided Upright tool will let you do so manually. You can pick up the tool at the top left of the Transform panel. Then drag through the image to make lines along objects in the scene that you know to be either perfectly horizontal or vertical.

18 Sort hot spots

Sometimes portrait subjects can have unflattering bright hot spots on the skin that make the face look sweaty. This is easy to tone down with Lightroom's Adjustment Brush. Grab the tool from the Develop Module toolbar then set Clarity to -50 in the tool settings to the right. Paint over the skin to soften the hot spots.



20 Boost dull colours If your photos look dull upon importing them into Lightroom, try a different camera profile. You can choose a profile in the Camera Calibration panel. The profiles on offer match your camera's picture styles. If you like you can set a default profile for all imported photos – hold Alt and the 'Set Default' button appears below.

New York's unmissable 5

Captured by Marianna Sgherri on a Nikon D7500. Discover her journey at secretescapes.com/nikon/new-york

In New York, icons and diverse cultural delights abound. The streets lace together a rich tapestry of beguiling scenes, intimate portraits of life in a heady metropolis, that long to be captured

This dense collection of island spits and daringly unique neighbourhoods offers urban wanderers a veritable host of irresistible eye candy. Walking the electric streets renders vivid snapshots of life – it is, without doubt, a street photographer's paradise. From the tough glass-and-concrete playpen of the Financial District to the hipster cool of Brooklyn, you'll find the most fascinating subjects to shoot – they positively illuminate the streets. Away from the hustle at street level you'll discover glorious views over this iconic skyline. Head to the towering heights of the Empire State Building or the Top of the Rock for irresistible panorama, before losing yourself in the charged frenzy of the urban scene below. Hop across neighbourhoods and find Cyrillic shop signs, espresso bars and dim-sum joints that stand as symbols of New York's rich cultural diversity.

It helps to pack light when out and about – grab your camera and head into town. A rough plan of the key sights you want to see is a great starting point, but one of the fundamental joys of shooting here is capturing those fleeting moments that greet you at every turn. A small tripod works nicely for long exposures, be they street scenes or night shoots. A selection of lenses is nice to have, but in reality, you should aim to be able to quickly lift your camera and shoot, and not feel weighed down by your gear.

Discover our top picks to help inspire your very own photographic adventure in New York.

Top of the Rock



Captured by Marianna Sgherri on a Nikon D7500

The observation deck atop the Rockefeller Center offers superlative views over Lower Manhattan on one side and Central Park on the other. It's less crowded than the deck at the Empire

State Building and includes great views of, you guessed it, the Empire State Building! An evening slot is perfect for catching great light over the city, with the skyscrapers and distant streets lighting up one by one.

High Line



A disused, suspended railway line that snakes through the old slaughterhouses of the Meatpacking District is now an elevated park with truly spectacular views over the city. You'll see New York like you've never seen it before, looking down at the pedestrian traffic and catching long views down the endlessly straight streets from your elevated position. This would give a truly unique perspective on Manhattan street life.

Little Italy and Chinatown



Captured by Marianna Sgherri on a Nikon D7500

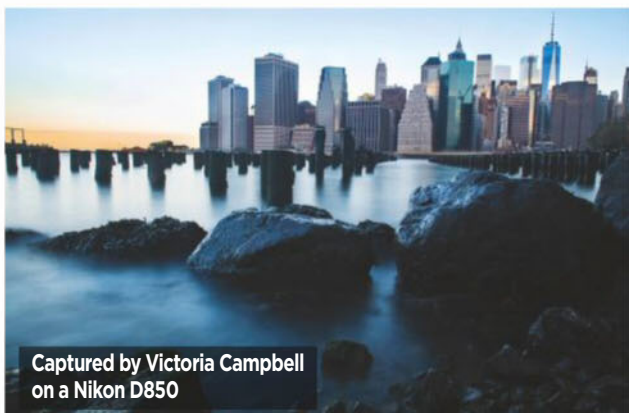
New York's streets sing with diversity, built on a history of immigration that has crafted a thriving cultural powerhouse. These two adjoining neighbourhoods are stalwart examples of how new communities thrived in Manhattan, offering iconic shots of roasted ducks hanging in windows, quaint trattorias that time seemingly forgot, and illuminating night-time neon. Head for hidden parks and catch old timers animatedly playing mahjong or practicing their dance moves – a delight for street photographers.

Central Park



Another famous Manhattan landmark, Central Park offers unique views of the city while also allowing time to recharge from the hustle and bustle. Fascinating contrasts between the lush fauna of the park and the seemingly impenetrable wall of high rises that mark its edges make for unique images. Frame the vast reservoir against the looming skyscrapers of the Upper West Side before exploring the acutely rectangular sprawl.

Brooklyn Bridge Park



Captured by Victoria Campbell
on a Nikon D850

This location has become something of a hotspot for passing photographers. It offers great shots of the Lower Manhattan skyline, with the East River dominating the foreground. The wooden stumps add great foreground geometry to make your skyline shots even more interesting. From here you can also take pictures of both the Manhattan and Brooklyn bridges.

Inspired yet? Discover our journey



Nikon and Secret Escapes recently sent one aspiring photographer along with a professional to New York to learn how to capture the perfect shot. Armed with the Nikon D7500 and D850, discover their own selection of unmissable photogenic spots. Follow their journey, with professional tips and tricks to help you get the most out of a New York photography adventure.

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LOCATION GUIDE

Balnakeil Bay

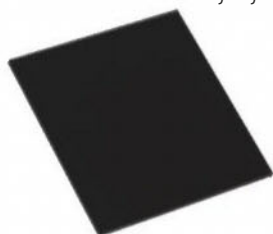
This beautiful bay in the Scottish Highlands provides photo opportunities all year round, says **Jon Gibbs**



KIT LIST

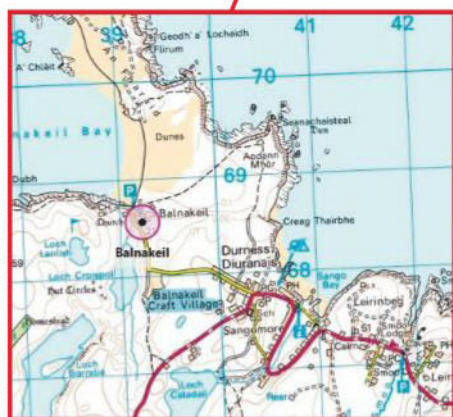
▼ Big Stopper filter

At Faraid Head the sea stacks make great subjects for long-exposure photography. A Big Stopper filter could also be used to accentuate the movement of the grasses on the dunes if it's a windy day.



▼ Solid tripod

The weather this far north can be a little wild. You can avoid camera shake by using a solid tripod. It's a good idea to fit spikes to your tripod if it has that option.

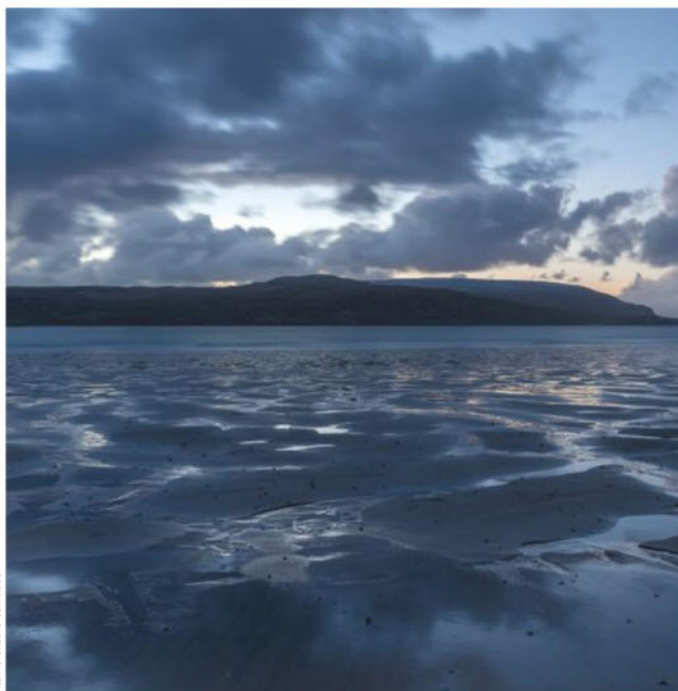


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BALNAKEIL Bay is one of many superb locations on the northern coast of Sutherland, Scotland, and requires a good few visits to capture its ever-changing moods. The images here were all taken in winter, but the weather can be dramatic at any time of the year.

This sandy bay is backed by dunes and rocks and has wonderful views in all directions. Walking along the beach there are stunning vistas westwards towards the isolated and dramatic Cape Wrath. Facing back inland the mountains of the far north of Sutherland offer a fine background for any shot. To the north the dramatic Faraid Head, home to an MOD base, has an impressive coastal landscape of cliffs and jagged sea stacks. From here the views eastwards along the coast are beautiful too.

To reach Balnakeil, head for Durness (either from the south or east via the A838) and look for the turning to Balnakeil village. Follow the road past the Craft Village and the impressive bulk of Balnakeil House will soon become visible. Parking is available opposite the house and churchyard – both of which make great subjects for pictures themselves.



ALL PICTURES © JON GIBBS



**AWARD-WINNING
COLLECTIONS**
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**GOOD
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Shooting advice

On a winter trip to the Durness area I made two visits to Balnakeil Bay, and even then I had barely scratched the surface of the possibilities. Go with the intention of capturing one facet of the location and head back another day for another part, as walking distances are quite long and this will waste time if the light is good.

Morning trip

For early morning shooting I would suggest the beach or the dunes close to the beach – the light will look beautiful on the grasses and this will make a great foreground for images either shot along the length of the beach or westward towards Cape Wrath. If there is a low tide get down on to the beach and check what the sand patterns look like. These can provide a wonderful foreground, and often make beautiful images in themselves. If you find yourself at Balnakeil on a windy day use the movement in the grasses on the dunes to your advantage: employ a big stopper and take wider vistas or abstract scenes.

Sea stacks

Make the effort to climb up one of the big dunes (for wide vistas). If it is not too windy a telephoto lens can be used to pick out the dramatic shapes of the mountains inland. Faraid Head is a great place to end the day. The coast here is extremely rugged and there are possibilities to shoot from the shore as well as the cliffs. Make use of the wonderful sea stacks – look out for waves crashing into them.



The sweeping arc of Balnakeil Bay at low tide viewed from the extensive dune system
Nikon D810, 35mm, 1/15sec at f/11, ISO 100



At low tide the sand patterns on the beach at Balnakeil are stunning
Nikon D810, 35mm, 15secs at f/8, ISO 160



Some of the dunes at Balnakeil are like hills. Here they are pictured at twilight
Nikon D810, 35mm, 1sec at f/11, ISO 200



Jon Gibbs

Jon Gibbs is a professional landscape photographer and gallery owner from Norfolk. In 2007 he won Take a View: Landscape Photographer of the Year, and has been commended in various international photographic competitions. Jon runs landscape workshops across the UK. Visit www.jon-gibbs.co.uk.



Reader Portfolio

Spotlight on readers' excellent images and how they captured them

Roy Jacobson, Clevedon, North Somerset



Roy has been taking pictures since he was a teenager, but his interest in photography really blossomed with the arrival of digital equipment. He joined Portishead Camera Club in 2000, and has been an active member ever since. He enjoys wildlife photography, but also has a penchant for aviation. 'I love the unpredictability of wildlife, especially flurries of movement that are too fast to appreciate with the naked eye,' he explains. 'I also enjoy taking aviation shots and I try to add something extra to both static and flight pictures.' Roy often converts his wildlife images to black & white.



Little egret

1 Roy spotted this little egret looking for food in a small drainage channel in the Somerset levels. The bird was very skittish and would have taken flight if he had approached on foot so he took this image from his car. Canon EOS 7D Mk II, 100-400mm, 1/3200 at f/10, ISO 800



Pelican pair

2 Roy wanted to achieve a picture where two Dalmatian pelicans created a semi-mirror image, and the birds at Paignton Zoo were happy to oblige. They only held the position for a few seconds so he had to act quickly. Canon EOS 7D Mk II, 100-400mm, 1/400sec at f/11, ISO 800



2



Manfrotto The Reader Portfolio

winner chosen every week will receive a **Manfrotto PIXI EVO tripod** worth £44.95. Visit www.manfrotto.co.uk

Lightweight and portable, the Manfrotto PIXI EVO boasts two different leg angles with a sliding selector enabling you to shoot ground-level images. It's adjustable, with two-section legs featuring five different steps that adapt the footprint to uneven surfaces. With a payload of 2.5kg, you can tilt the camera 90° to capture incredible images.



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4

Bathing greylag

3 Roy often photographs wild birds in public parks as they are used to people, which makes it easier to approach them. He selected a greylag goose preening and dipping its head in the water. Canon EOS 7D Mk II, 100-400mm, 1/4000sec at f/5.6, ISO 800

Pelican spray

4 There is a good collection of Dalmatian pelicans at Paignton Zoo, with a large lake providing space and a pleasing background. Roy wanted to show good feather detail and a pleasing spread of plumage and water. Canon EOS 7D Mk II, 100-400mm, 1/4000sec at f/6.3, ISO 800

Baboon mother

5 Paignton Zoo is also home to a collection of primates including gorilla, orangutan, mandrill and baboon. Roy enjoyed observing the relationship between this female baboon and her baby. Canon EOS 7D Mk II, 100-400mm, 1/500sec at f/5.6, ISO 800



5



New York, New York, 1964

Postcards from. America

In a new exhibition **Stephen Shore** is given a retrospective grand enough to match his prolific output. **Oliver Atwell** looks at his groundbreaking work

The year is 1961. The scene is Midtown Manhattan, New York. Stephen Shore, a 14-year-old, wet-behind-the-ears photographer and son of Jewish handbag makers, wipes the rain from his brow, takes a deep breath, and knocks on the office of the curator of photography at New York's Museum of Modern Art. Moments later, Shore finds himself in the presence of master photographer Edward Steichen, the very curator of photography he is due to meet, having



Left: 1.35am in a Chinatown Restaurant, New York, New York 1965-7

Right: 2nd Street, Ashland, Wisconsin, July 1973



Amarillo, Texas, July 1972



Washington, D.C., November 1972

made an appointment over the phone. With unshakable aplomb, Shore asks Steichen to spare five minutes to look through his small portfolio. Steichen is so impressed with this self-taught photographer that he buys three of his prints there and then. And so it begins...

Today, Shore is considered one of the world's most influential living photographers and the traces of his work extend as far as theory, art and cinema. This influence is apparent in a major new exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (funny how life can often come full circle) where we start at the beginning with Shore's early black & white prints and come bang up to date with his surprising embracement of the social-media platform Instagram.

Factory work

Following his encounter with Steichen, Shore dedicated himself to perfecting his craft. His images of the time were a reaction to what

he saw as the banal and kitsch imagery that dominated photography. Using Walker Evans as his guiding light, he further developed an artistic sensibility that found him exploring the everyday world that he saw around him.

In the mid-1960s, at the age of 17, Shore ran into New York's prince of Pop Art, Andy Warhol, and soon found himself embedded in Warhol's Factory. Over a period of months, he created the most enduring documents of that period – images still considered the definitive record of a period that has become so utterly influential in the contemporary art world.

People starting from Shore's later, colour-saturated, sober work and travelling backwards might be surprised by these almost 'diaristic, informal images', as the writer and curator David Company calls them. But look a little closer and you can already see the seeds of Shore's formalistic approaches beginning to take shape.



➤ In fact, Warhol's work ethic proved hugely influential. Perhaps more than anything we can draw parallels between Warhol's approach to everyday objects as sources of beauty and fascination. Like Warhol, Shore was able to explore the quotidian in an attempt to, as the writer John Updike said of his own work, 'give the mundane its beautiful due'. This idea was to find its ultimate expression in what Shore attempted next – a series of works that would go on to establish him as the photographer he is today.

Scene as seen

In 1968, Shore launched his first major publication *Andy Warhol*, and in 1971 became only the second living photographer to have a solo show at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Not long after this, he embarked on a series of trips across the USA that found him developing the conceptual framework that would carry him through the next few years.

American Surfaces is a different beast to his previous work. Looking at the 35mm colour images now, the first term to come to mind is



Beverly Boulevard and La Brea Avenue, Los Angeles, California, June 1975

'snap-shot photography'. The project is, as Shore describes it, a 'less mediated' style of photography. The images attempted to recreate Shore's own field of vision as he made his journey across the country, capturing the mundane scenes and objects he would encounter on the way – food, televisions, motel rooms, lamps. These 'hyperlucid stares' consist of a series of repeated motifs that attempt to get to the heart of the American experience through a visual representation of its 'things'.

Later, Shore put these images on show and the reception was less than sympathetic. The images, which were printed in labs across the USA, were presented unframed and unmounted and were – shock horror – shot in colour. Keep in mind these images were produced at a time when black & white was still the homogeneous style of

photography. Colour in photography was seen as unworthy, cheap and somewhat superficial.

'A year [after the show],' Shore said, 'I had lunch with Paul Strand, who – as a polite older gentleman talking to a young aspiring artist – told me that higher emotions could not be communicated in colour.' Undeterred, Shore forged on to perhaps his most influential project: the perhaps ironically titled, *Uncommon Places*.

The beautiful banal

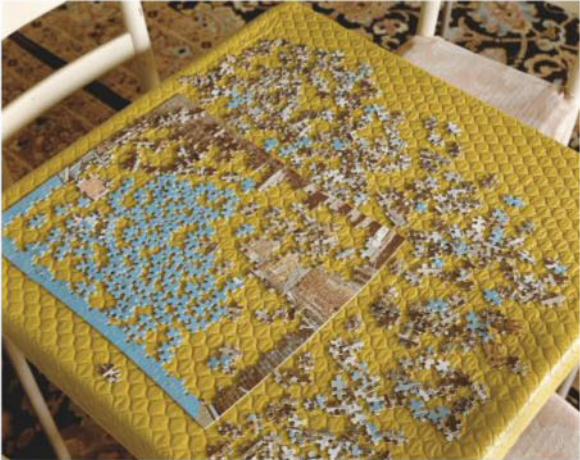
Where *American Surfaces* is about things, *Uncommon Places*, is most definitely about scenes, all of which were captured on large and lucid 4x5, and later 8x10, negatives. *Uncommon Places* consists of a series of images – streets, sidewalks, gas stations, architecture – that on the surface appear almost banal. However, a closer look reveals them



Above: West 3rd Street, Parkersburg, West Virginia, May 1974

Right: Lookout Hotel, Ogunquit, Maine, July 1974

Far right: Breakfast, Trail's End Restaurant, Kanab, Utah, August 1973





'For the majority of us, life doesn't consist of events – it consists of things, objects and details'

as carefully observed set-pieces that demonstrate Shore's preoccupation with form versus content, and his musings on what it is to reduce a real three-dimensional space to a two-dimensional plane. The images in *Uncommon Places* require patience and meditation. Spending time in the company of these images is to be faced with a series of questions about the nature of photography. They are perhaps one of the greatest aids to students looking to study the theoretical underpinnings of photography that we have. The influential urban images in this project – which were first seen in the early 1980s – can be seen to this day in the photography of Andreas Gursky, Joel Sternfeld and Gregory Crewdson, and in filmmakers such as Wes Anderson, Wim Wenders and, to an extent, David Lynch. Further, they were significant in establishing colour as a viable aesthetic for photography. Paul Strand's comments about the limited possibilities of colour were undercut by the series of photographers that followed in Shore's wake, most notably Nan Goldin and Martin Parr.

In an instant

In the years that followed, Shore would constantly reinvent himself, producing images that illustrated everyday life in Israel and the West Bank, returning to black & white in the 1990s, adopting digital in the 2000s, and later exploring the possibilities of digital printing and

social media. This desire to keep his process moving, to avoid, where possible, repeating himself, comes from an experience he once had during a dinner with Ansel Adams. It's a story that Shore has often used to open his lectures.

'We got on really well and Ansel has been a great inspiration, but during this dinner, I saw him drink six large tumblers of straight vodka,' Shore says. 'And then at some point in the discussion, he said, "I had a creative hot streak in the 1940s, and since then I've been potboiling." He didn't say it with anguish but just out of recognition of the nature of his achievement and his situation. I thought to myself, Gee, when I'm 85 and talking to a 25-year-old, I don't want to look at my life and say that.'

An idea for a day

It's interesting to see that, in many ways, Shore's work has come full circle. These days, when he's not guiding students as the director of photography at Bard College in New York, something he has been doing since 1982, he is busying himself creating work specifically with Instagram in mind. This isn't a case of making images and then uploading. The very platform he is using to get these images into the world is in many ways the theoretical underpinning of the work. In his own words, Instagram allows him to 'try an idea for a day'.

'The individual pictures don't have to be the deepest, most profound

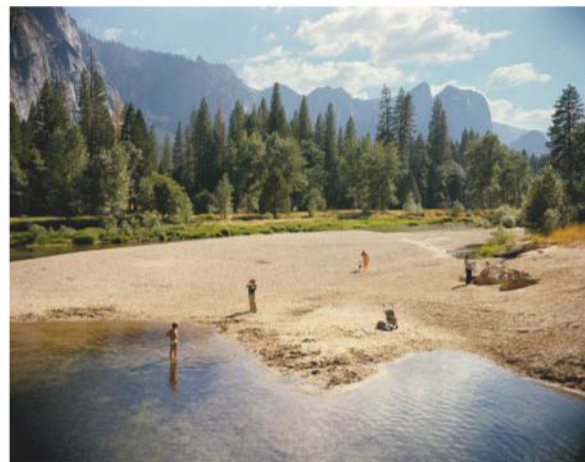
West 9th Avenue,
Amarillo, Texas,
October 1974

Stephen Shore is an influential American photographer who is known for his pioneering colour photography of everyday scenes and objects. His projects include *American Surfaces*, *Uncommon Places*, *Essex County* and *From Galilee to the Negev*. Stephen's retrospective show at New York's Museum of Modern Art runs until 28 May 2018.

photographs; they can be quick observations,' Shore told the website *American Suburb X* back in 2014. 'They can be one-liners, essentially. And they work completely well in that form.'

Here, we're seeing Shore return to his conceptual roots. These images sit comfortably beside the work of *American Surfaces*. Both projects deal with similar subjects – daily objects and scenes. Back in the 1970s, what was particularly notable about Shore's work was that it flew in the face of convention. Where many of his contemporaries concerned themselves with capturing the USA's turbulent political climate, Shore focused on the small things – the details. And here he is again, showing us that it's little details that make up our lives. After all, for the majority of us, life doesn't consist of events – it consists of things, objects and details. Something as innocuous as a particular type of light, a meal or a colour become the things that carry weight. Perhaps in this sense, Shore gives us one of the truest depictions of our world.

AP



Merced River, Yosemite National Park, California, August 1979



Isaak Bakmayev's Medals, Berdichev, Zhytomyrska Province, Ukraine, July 2012

A day of distinction

Wondering how good your photography really is? A distinction, such as those offered by the RPS, can be a good benchmark. **Geoff Harris** finds out more

How does an amateur gauge the level of his/her photography? You can try to sell images commercially, which has become a lot more difficult; enter your pictures in competitions, which have become a lot more, well, competitive; or try to get some kind of camera club or photographic society 'distinction'. Basically this is where a group of experienced peers judge a selection or panel of your images to see if they meet the required standard for a particular distinction or qualification. The pioneer of this process in the UK is the Royal Photographic Society (founded in 1853), which offers three popular distinctions – the Licentiateship (LRPS), the more demanding Associateship (ARPS), and the highly prized Fellowship (FRPS). While having these letters after your name won't necessarily raise your profile or help you sell more pictures, working through the distinction process can be very rewarding, while also helping you to focus on areas for improvement. It also gives you something to aim for;

you could put strong images to use, which might otherwise languish on a hard drive or yesterday's social media posts. It can also motivate you to learn new skills.

Cream of Devon

While it may be a first step, the Licentiateship – or 'L' – is far from a formality. You need to demonstrate solid technical skills and a creative eye. The Associateship – or 'A' – requires you to show creative ability and personal style, along with complete control of the technical aspects of photography. But to make the process less daunting, the RPS organises regular advisory days, where members can present their chosen images for informal feedback and advice. The Western Region recently held such a day in Devon for L and A candidates, so I went along to see what happens.

The day unfolded in a hotel in Bovey Tracey near Exeter, and the venue soon became packed with people either presenting panels or observing. After a short introduction, the two guest assessors – Susan Brown and Peter



© GEOFF HARRIS

Above: Advisory days offer a great chance to get informal feedback on your proposed panel from highly experienced assessors

Paterson, both FRPS heavy-hitters – introduced themselves. Most advisory days follow a similar format, kicking off with a discussion of why previously successful L and A panels made the grade. The assessors then scrutinised about 10 panels from attendees, which they had never seen before, with a break for lunch. They gave constructive feedback, chatting with the photographer if present and answering questions from the audience. The atmosphere was focused, but friendly and supportive. Once the day is done, candidates have time to change or tweak their panels before the RPS assessment day. While

Left: All aspects of proposed images are scrutinised, as well as how well the entire panel hangs together



© GEOFF HARRIS



David's bold architecture shot shows variety of approach

'An invaluable day'

Two LRPS contenders share their experience of the advisory day



David Rudge

'I approached the LRPS advisory day as another milestone along my journey to become a better photographer. I find that there is nothing more challenging than placing your work under the scrutiny of expert eyes, and this should always be taken as a learning experience be it at a club or national forum. The advisory day turned out to be invaluable in many ways. There were positives that included recognition that my panel provided a good spread of different types of

techniques with some good and interesting images. However, and more importantly, the more critical comments provided me with a greater insight into how all images can be improved both in the environment in which they are captured (a grain of dust on the lens of one image didn't help!) and how they could be developed further with software. It was clear that a successful LRPS panel needs to contain 10 images of a high standard that demonstrate a variety of approaches that somehow come together as a cohesive whole – the 11th image. I now know what I need to do to improve.'

➤ there is no guarantee they will pass, the candidates should have a clearer idea of what they need to do – and the RPS maintains that candidates who have attended such days tend to do much better.

Associate-level candidates can base their images around a specific genre (e.g. travel, natural history, science or fine art). But Licentiate candidates in some ways have a slightly tougher job as they need to show variety in approach and techniques but not necessarily in subject matter. So, rather than looking for a variety of subjects (say a seascape next to an insect macro), assessors look for a variety of approaches: the use of different lenses, shutter speeds, aperture, movement and so on. Some of the L panels on the day incorporated two images of similar subjects, but this wasn't a problem as they had demonstrated varied approaches. This is not to say an Associateship is somehow easier: candidates have to supply 15 images (it's 10 for the L), that are scrutinised in exacting detail by sharp-eyed pundits. Indeed, images that get you a polite round of applause at your camera club or even win a contest might not be so well received by RPS assessors, who are working to strict and consistent national standards. This is why it's a valued distinction.

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My handsome prints

On the subject of quality, it soon became clear that the RPS assessors have little tolerance for common technical howlers, such as blown-out highlights/lost shadow detail, unsharp images or ham-fisted editing. At both L and A levels, seriously blown-out highlights and blocks of undifferentiated shadow are apparently major reasons for failure. At Fellowship level, meanwhile, such sins wouldn't even get you through the door. As for sharpness, images should be pin-sharp where they need to be (on the eyes of a portrait, for example), or there needs to be deliberate creative movement and blur. 'Don't leave assessors wondering if you got it right or not,' says Peter Paterson, while emphasising that over-sharpening will be penalised, too. This is one of the key advantages of attending the advisory day: although the guest assessors on the day won't be judging your final panel, they can easily spot potential problems, allowing you time to fix them or find alternative images.

Another key teaching point was

'Candidates who have attended RPS advisory days tend to do better'

the concept of the '11th' image. An L panel comprises 10 images and an A panel 15, so the 11th is the hanging plan – how well the printed images hang together as a cohesive unit. So the assessors gave a lot of attention to the order of images in panels, changing the layout for a more pleasing 'whole'. As Susan Brown pointed out, it is crucial that your panel makes a good first impression as the actual assessors look at it from a distance and then move in. She also recommended that candidates don't print any bigger than A4 – larger sizes can make technical issues such as softness or noise more obvious, while smaller will invite extra scrutiny. Mixing mount sizes tends to be frowned upon too, as it can look inconsistent. Candidates don't have to supply prints; digital images are also accepted but this is quite risky unless you have a fully calibrated digital projector, as used by the

Above: Candidates can also bring along 'spare' images, which sometimes end up in the final panel following the advisory day

RPS. Any faults in your image will also be blown-up big for all to see.

Other issues to watch out for include cluttered compositions with distracting backgrounds, and overly aggressive cropping which makes the subject feel 'cramped' – this was a particular problem with wildlife images on the Devon day. The occasional wonky horizon was pointed out, too. When it comes to editing, some 'gardening' with software to get rid of distractions is allowed, but heavy comping or image manipulation is not (this depends on the category you are going for at A level, however). A mixture of black & white and colour is acceptable in both L and A panels, so long as the mono conversion is well-executed, and the cohesion and balance of the panel as a whole is maintained. Again, the only way to see if your mix of mono and colour works is to get feedback from an experienced assessor.

Worth a shot

I should probably disclose at this point that I got my LRPS in 2014, so



I have a good understanding of what the process involves. Getting my L was not easy, but having to think so carefully about so many aspects of image making and print presentation definitely helped my photography to evolve (and before any cynics chip in, it's an anonymous process, so the panel had no idea I worked on magazines).

Of course, the RPS is not the only game in town, and photographers working professionally in particular genres, such as weddings, might prefer to get a distinction from a specialist body, such as the Society of Wedding and Portrait Photographers (SWPP) or Master Photographers Association (MPA). For more generalist photographers, however, who are keen to see what level their work is at, or need a bit of extra motivation to get out there with their camera, doing an RPS distinction would be very sound idea – and the qualification is recognised all over the world. For full details about distinctions and local advisory days, see www.rps.org/distinctions.



Even for the entry-level L distinction, exposure must be well controlled

© STEVE JUPP

If at first you don't succeed...

Two LRPS contenders share their experience of the advisory day



Steve Jupp

'I went along because I had tried for the Licentiatehip a couple of years back and failed. Last time I didn't seek advice from the people involved in the process, so this was a great opportunity to hear from the experts. I was first up and delighted to get a positive response to my panel: one image needed more contrast and one was not up to the standard, but I had a worthy replacement in reserve. I've now booked in again for the formal assessment at RPS HQ in Bath in February.

'I'm grateful to my mentor for suggesting that

I go for the 'L'. It has given me a focus and aim which have really helped me to develop my photography and feel confident about handling the camera in all circumstances. If I am successful this time I am looking forward to going for my Associateship and ... who knows what in the future!

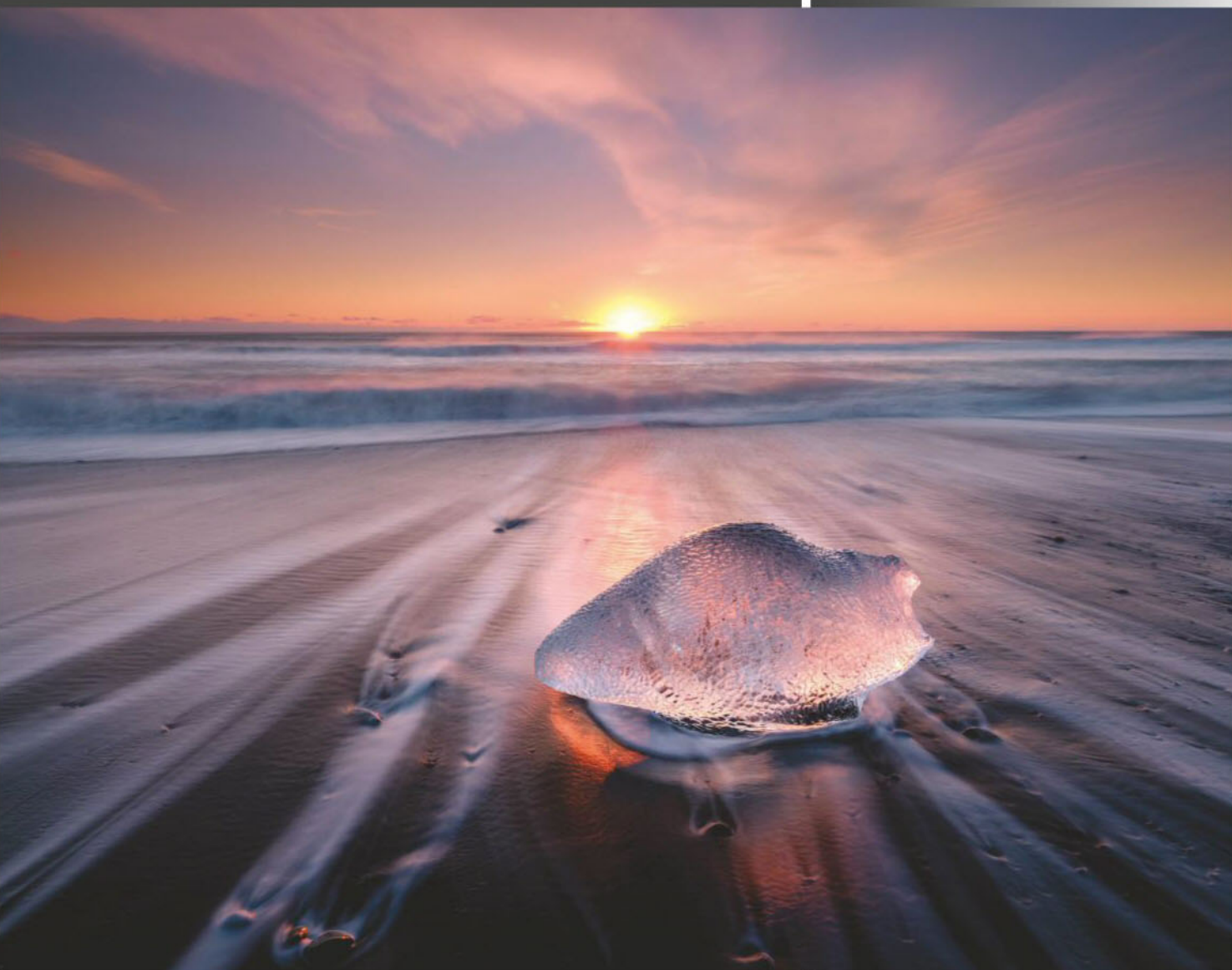
'I took up photography as a "serious amateur" when I retired from a very busy job in the NHS, and it has given me a focus and purpose which have been very valuable after retiring from full-time work. I love how time stands still when I am outdoors, either when shooting landscape or a city, with a camera around my neck.'



© STEVE JUPP

Steve Jupp was pleased to get some positive feedback on his panel at the advisory day

Reverse ND filters



'Diamond Beach' near Jökulsárlón Glacier Lagoon in Iceland is a photographer's paradise: a black sand beach stretching as far as the eye can see, littered with blocks of glistening ice - a genuinely unique location. I'm fortunate enough to have visited it on a number of occasions, but the weather in Iceland is unpredictable, to say the least and it's rare that my visits seem to coincide with good light. This particular morning was an exception, however; the horizon was clear at dawn and there was enough high cloud in the sky to catch the colour from the rising sun.

One of the problems with shooting at sunrise and sunset is that the brightest part of the scene is on the horizon. Using traditional graduated filters is therefore tricky, as they are darkest at the top and fade gradually towards the transition zone - meaning they are not always as strong on the horizon as they need to be. LEE's Reverse ND filters solve this problem by being darker on the horizon and then fading towards the top of the filter. The transition zone is well-judged, being strong enough to control the light but soft enough to blend in to the horizon unobtrusively. For this shot, I chose a 3-stop Reverse ND, and the result is a natural-looking sky, even with the bright sun climbing above the horizon.

M Bauer

Mark Bauer
markbauerphotography.com

0.9 Reverse ND (3 stops)
1.2 ProGlass IRND (4 stops)
Fuji GFX 50s, Fuji GF 23mm f/4,
ISO 100, 2.1 seconds at f/16

The Reverse ND range available for the
Seven5, 100mm and SW150 systems



0.6 Reverse
ND filter
(2 stops)



0.9 Reverse
ND filter
(3 stops)



1.2 Reverse
ND filter
(4 stops)

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The compact size of the lens makes it an ideal candidate for travel photography. Panasonic Lumix G9 and 1.4x converter, 1/100sec at f/4, ISO 400

Panasonic Leica DG Elmarit 200mm f/2.8 Power O.I.S

Is this the telephoto lens Micro Four Thirds users have been waiting for? **Michael Topham** finds out

One thing Micro Four Thirds users have never been short of is a good selection of telephoto lenses to choose from. Two standout zoom lenses are the Panasonic Leica DG Vario Elmar 100–400mm f/4–6.3 Asph Power OIS and Olympus M.Zuiko Digital 40–150mm f/2.8 PRO. When the number of available telephoto zooms is compared to the number of telephoto primes, you realise there's not all that many of the latter. Unlike Olympus, which offers the excellent M.Zuiko Digital 75mm f/1.8 ED and mighty M.Zuiko Digital 300mm f/4 IS PRO, the longest prime Panasonic has had to offer is the Leica DG Macro-Elmarit 45mm f/2.8 Mega OIS.

Late last year, Panasonic began addressing the shortage of fixed telephoto lenses in its

line-up by unveiling the very long-titled Panasonic Leica DG Elmarit 200mm f/2.8 Power OIS. Given the opportunity to find out how it performs, I jumped at the chance to put it through its paces in the type of environment where it's likely to see regular use.

Features

Micro Four Thirds lenses are renowned for being smaller, lighter and less cumbersome than DSLR optics. When you take the 2x crop factor into consideration and realise that what we're looking at here is a 400mm equivalent f/2.8 lens, it doesn't take long to appreciate how compact it is compared to DSLR equivalents. To put it in perspective, Canon's EF 400mm f/2.8 L IS II USM extends almost

35cm from the front of the camera, weighs 3.85kg and costs £9,499. In comparison, this premium optic has an overall length of 17.4cm, weighs 1.2kg and costs £2,699. Better still, Panasonic throws in a 1.4x teleconverter as part of the boxed contents, boosting the focal length to 280mm (560mm equivalent) without the need of having to pay a penny more.

As a lens that looks set to entice sports and wildlife photographers using Panasonic and Olympus cameras, it has to put in a sensational performance if serious users are going to consider parting with more than £2,500 for it. Panasonic claims this has been achieved by designing it with a complex arrangement of 15 lens elements in 13 groups. A pair of UED (ultra extra low dispersion) glass lenses is also included to achieve high resolution while suppressing distortion and chromatic aberration, with nine circular aperture blades making up the optical design.

The lens comes equipped with inbuilt optical image stabilisation to counteract





Panasonic's 2x teleconverter (DMW-TC20) converts the lens into a 400mm f/5.6 prime, equivalent to 800mm in full-frame terms
Panasonic Lumix G9 and 2x converter, 1/500sec at f/5.6, ISO 800

handshake. It has been designed to work most effectively with the Dual IS (Image Stabilizer) and Dual IS II systems that you'll find on most recent Panasonic Lumix G-series cameras, providing up to 6.5 stops of compensation with the latter. Nano surface coatings are used to eliminate the effects of flare and ghosting in images and the high-precision autofocus has been designed to offer the highest accuracy and speed of any telephoto lens currently offered by Panasonic.

At the front, the lens accepts filters and adapters via the common 77mm thread size. Other important features to note include its 1.15m minimum focusing distance and the accessories that come with it. In the box you'll find the 1.4x teleconverter (DMW-TC14), a long plastic lens hood, removable tripod mount, lens cap and storage bag.

Build and handling

The lens has similar styling to Panasonic's 100-400mm f/4-6.3 Power OIS telephoto zoom and tapers in to a metal lens mount at the rear. It has a high-end finish with engraved, finely painted lettering, and knurled collar release and tripod mount knobs. The only thing about the latter is that it could benefit from a hexagonal hole so it could be tightened with an allen key. As it is, the access prevents you getting a really tight turn of it with your fingers and it's susceptible to working loose over time. Unlike the tripod mount, the lens collar isn't removable, but it does rotate fluidly and there are small white lines to help align it precisely in the landscape or portrait orientation.



The lens delivers exquisite sharpness between f/4 and f/5.6, which is its so-called 'sweet spot'
Panasonic Lumix G9 and 1.4x converter, 1/2000sec at f/4, ISO 400

The lens feels very well balanced when it's coupled to G-series cameras with a large grip, such as the Lumix G9 and Lumix GH5. It's not an unwieldy lens by any means and can be comfortably handheld for long durations without the need for a monopod or tripod. This makes it ideal for those times when you'd like to travel light and it allowed me to shoot spur-of-the-moment shots on safari with ease, where there's often little space or time to assemble any additional support.

The AF/MF and Power OIS switches are set back towards the rear of the lens and have a different profile to one another, so you can identify which is which when your eye is raised to the camera. In front of the fixed lens collar is a focus range limiter switch and below this is a focus button that's used in combination with the focus selector switch.

The memory switch setting is useful for recording a focus position and recalling it later, while the Fn setting allows users to

'It's not an unwieldy lens by any means and can be comfortably handheld for long durations'

customise which feature the focus button provides direct access to. Ahead of these controls, you'll come across a smooth manual-focus ring and fairly thin aperture ring. It would have been nice to see these rubberised, but the latter does click through its range very satisfyingly in 1/3-stop increments.

As would be expected of a lens that's likely to see a great deal of outdoor use, it has a freeze, dust and splashproof construction. The lens did get quite wet during a brief rain shower, but didn't show any ill effects and continued to work faultlessly during my testing.

Image quality

Real-world testing of the lens produced very satisfying results. Although I could only review images on the rear screen of the camera during safari, inspection at the highest level of magnification in playback mode suggested the lens was extremely sharp. The camera and lens stabilisation works a treat when it's used handheld, and with the camera braced against my eye and the lens supported in the palm of my left hand I had no difficulty whatsoever capturing sharp shots at as slow as 1/15sec. Turning the Power OIS off and then on again is a real eye-opener, demonstrating how effective it is at negating camera shake.

Once back at the office, results from the lab were carefully inspected alongside my South Africa safari images. Shots taken at f/2.8 create pleasing blur both in front of and behind subjects, but to eke out the best sharpness from centre to edge it's worth closing the lens down a stop to f/4. Lab tests confirmed my real-world findings that f/4 is the sweet spot, with centre and corner figures at f/8 being almost identical to those recorded at f/2.8. The impact of diffraction generally hits Micro Four Thirds lenses a few stops earlier than full-frame, so it's advised that apertures beyond f/8 are avoided where possible.

Close examination of high-contrast edges showed that the two ultra-extra-low-dispersion glass elements do a mighty fine job of controlling fringing. Corner shading is well handled, too, and isn't visually intrusive. As our shading tests reveal, the edge of the frame is just 0.5EV darker than the centre at f/2.8. As you start to close down to f/5.6, any trace of vignetting vanishes. Those who use the lens with the supplied 1.4x teleconverter will also be glad images don't suffer from dark corners, even with the one stop reduction in maximum aperture at f/4, as illustrated in the giraffe shot.

Typically for a lens that's designed to excel at a fixed focal length, curvilinear distortion is virtually non-existent. Users can shoot safe in the knowledge that images won't suffer from barrel or pincushion distortion at the edge. Overall, a great set of results.



When the 1.4x teleconverter is attached, the minimum aperture of the lens reverts to f/4

Verdict

BUYING a fast fixed-focal-length telephoto prime typically involves spending a lot of money. Forking out £2,699 is a serious amount to drop on the lens reviewed here, but the fact that it's around £7,000 cheaper than a 400mm f/2.8 telephoto prime for a DSLR and is approximately one-third the size and weight of a 400mm DSLR lens does offer some justification for serious sports and wildlife photographers who might be tempted by it.

It's a sensational performer, delivering very sharp images, backed up with a quiet and accurate autofocus operation. All this while being nimble for handheld shooting and compact enough that it doesn't take up too much valuable space when travelling. I discovered that it's a superb safari lens and the 1.4x teleconverter can make all the difference between filling the frame with your subject and not. Having the converter supplied in the box is the icing on what I'd say is the finest telephoto prime I've tested for the Micro Four Thirds mount. And if all of the above wasn't good enough, lens hire companies such as Hirecamera.com now stock the lens, where for £42 a day (excluding VAT) you can try before you buy, or hire it for a once-in-a-lifetime trip.



Data file

Price £2,699
Filter diameter 77mm
Lens elements 15
Groups 13
Diaphragm blades 9
Aperture f/2.8-f/22
Minimum focus 115cm
Length 174mm
Diameter 87.5mm
Weight 1.245g
Lens mount Micro Four Thirds



Panasonic Leica DG Elmarit 200mm f/2.8 Power OIS

Resolution

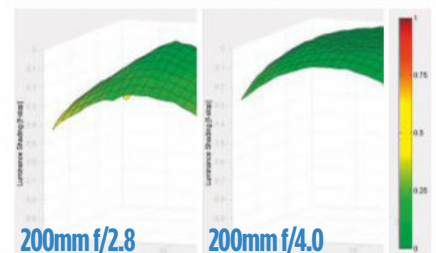
The graph shows that the lens is slightly sharper in the centre than at the edge when it's used at f/2.8. Stopping the aperture down sees the level of sharpness in the centre and at the edge improve to where it peaks at f/4. Centre sharpness remains a fraction higher at f/5.6 than it does at f/2.8, but by f/11 the sharpness levels begin to plummet as diffraction takes its toll. For the best sharpness, users should steer clear of using f/16 and f/22.



200mm centre — 200mm corner ·····

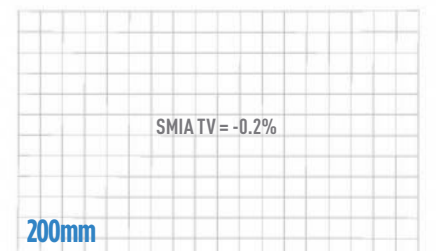
Shading

The vignetting that appears when the lens is used at its maximum aperture isn't a huge cause for concern. The fall-off recorded at f/2.8 was 0.5EV, which reduces to around 0.3EV when the lens is closed down a stop to f/4. Stop down to f/5.6 and corner shading is virtually non-existent.



Curvilinear distortion

As you'd expect from a long telephoto prime, distortion is well controlled and isn't anything to worry about. The lines on our distortion chart were rendered perfectly straight right into the corner of the frame. At the time of testing, no lens profile was available in ACR or Lightroom CC, however it's expected to be made available in a future update.



Trekking backpacks

Finding the perfect backpack to wear for landscape photography is no easy task. **James Abbott** reveals six of the best options

Storage

The most suitable bags for outdoor photography have extra storage for essential non-photographic items.

Pockets

When you're out in the field you'll need to carry a drink. Stretch side pockets are a great place to store a water bottle or two.

Rear access

Most backpacks with rear access offer a way of gaining access to your kit without getting the back of the bag dirty on the floor.

Straps

Some backpacks include attachments for carrying walking poles or even an ice axe – handy for venturing into wild locations.



Data file

	Material	Capacity	Kit access	Rain cover	Personal items storage	Tripod connection	Dimensions	Weight	Price
Tamrac Anvil Slim 15 Professional Backpack	500D Cordura nylon	Not specified	Front	Separate	Yes	Front	31x47x21cm	2.1kg	£135
Manfrotto Offroad Hiker Backpack 30L	Water-repellent nylon	30 litres	Side	Separate	Yes	Two on sides	30x55x24cm	1.9kg	£149
Lowepro Flipside 400 AW II	Various types of tough nylon	Not specified	Back	Built-in	Yes	Front	32x49x25.3cm	1.5kg	£155
Tenba Solstice 24L Backpack	Water repellent ripstop nylon	24 litres	Back or top	Separate	Yes	Side	30.5x50.8 x25.4cm	1.45kg	£175
MindShift BackLight 26L	420D velocity nylon	26 litres	Back	Separate	Yes	Front	29x51.5x20cm	1.8kg	£205
Billingham Rucksack 25	Fabric bonded to butyl rubber	11.4 litres	Front	N/A	Yes	No	34x44x23cm	1.59kg	£350

Ratings in this round-up are based upon using the bag for a day's landscape photography, and do not necessarily match previously published scores



Tamrac Anvil Slim 15 Professional Backpack

● £135 ● www.tamrac.com

Tamrac has undergone a dramatic evolution in recent years, with the release of an entirely new range of bags featuring new designs and lighter weight materials than previous bags. The Slim 15 will comfortably carry two compact system cameras all the way up to two pro-spec DSLRs such as a Nikon D850 or Canon EOS 5D Mark IV without a grip attached, a number of lenses and accessories.

On the front of the bag are two butterfly pockets that are ideal for carrying the small accessories you use often, eliminating the need to open the main compartment. These sit above a large front pocket, which includes a 15in laptop compartment, and is large enough to carry most of the personal items you'd need for a day out in the countryside. The bottom front pocket is designed to support a tripod, but in reality the straps alone will securely hold one in place.

The downside of the bag is that it doesn't have stretch mesh pockets on the sides for carrying quick-grab items such as a water bottle. You can, however, fit a 500ml bottle in the bottom front pocket. Alternatively, the Tamrac Anvil range is complemented by the Arc series, which consists of a number of attachments including lens cases, a filter case, belt pocket, water bottle pocket and flashgun pockets. These connect to the MOLLE attachments on the sides of the bag and the waist belt.

The Tamrac Anvil Slim 15 is comfortable to wear and will carry much more kit than you would normally need for a day of landscape shooting. Plus, you've got the generous front pocket for additional personal items. It's the heaviest bag in the test at 2.1kg, but that's only 650g more than the lightest. Access to your gear is quick and easy thanks to four exterior pockets, and smaller interior pockets are made of clear plastic so you can see what's within at a glance. Also, being a slim design means that if you use a 100mm filter system, you'll need to store it in a small case. But at £135 it's a great price for a high-quality backpack, and is well worth a look.



Manfrotto Offroad Hiker Backpack 30L

● £149 ● www.manfrotto.co.uk

The best type of bag you can have when you're out trekking is one that's designed specifically for this purpose. The problem is these aren't also designed to carry camera gear. With the aim of solving this problem the Manfrotto Offroad Hiker Backpack 30L is a photography backpack with a difference; by blending the best of both worlds, this camera bag wouldn't look out of place at the top of a mountain.

Available in blue, green, grey and red, which matches the typical colour scheme of standard trekking backpacks, the Offroad Hiker offers the least amount of dedicated space for kit out of all the bags tested. Photographic gear is carried in a removable insert that will hold up to a pro-spec DSLR with a lens attached but without a grip, an additional lens and accessories. This is arguably all you'd need for a day out shooting in the hills. Where the bag truly excels is in the amount of space offered for personal items in the top compartment – the largest capacity in the test.

Water can be carried in one of the stretch mesh side pockets, which also double up for carrying a tripod. The best configuration is to carry a one- or two-litre bottle of water on one side, and your tripod on the other to balance out the weight. The hip belt helps to direct the load onto your hips rather than your back and features a mesh pocket on one side and a closed pocket on the other. Two closed pockets would be preferable, but as it is, the mesh pocket is best used for items that can survive getting wet.

The Offroad Hiker feels rigid, but this is in part due to the hard contoured back that supports the bag like a traditional hiking backpack. This ultimately makes the bag comfortable to wear for long periods, and generous padding in the lower back area helps to maintain comfort. Plus, there's a mesh back to keep the bag away from the back to maintain and maximise airflow. All in all, it's a highly attractive option for the outdoor photographer who carries minimal kit and needs lots of personal storage space.



Lowepro Flipside 400 AW II

● £155 ● www.lowepro.co.uk

The Lowepro Flipside 400 AW II is the latest release in Lowepro's Flipside range. This, as the name cleverly suggests, features a rear entry so the bag can be placed front side down on the floor to gain access to kit, or held on the waist using the chunky waist belt to avoid getting the back of the bag dirty. It may not sound like a lot, but this simple feature makes a huge difference when you may be shooting in wet and/or muddy locations; however, don't expect it to work so well when the bag is fully laden with heavy lenses and a laptop.

With space to carry up to two pro-spec DSLRs without a grip attached, a number of lenses and accessories, there's more space for kit than you'd really need when shooting landscapes. Also, the internal dividers offer some of the most comprehensive interior customisation options of all the bags in the test, with a front pocket that's large enough for a down jacket or raincoat. If you require additional storage there are attachment points on either side of the Flipside – these are located above the stretch mesh pockets for carrying bottles of water or anything else that you need quick access to.

The Flipside is comfortable to wear thanks to generous and well-positioned padding on the back of the bag and the waist belt. The downside, however, is that unless you're small, the waist belt has a tendency to sit rather high above the hips and around the stomach, which means the weight of the bag won't be sufficiently distributed.

The Lowepro Flipside 400 AW II is a cavernous bag that belies its compact appearance. As well as carrying a pro-spec DSLR without a grip at the bottom, it will also hold a large 100mm filter system case at the top. Build quality is great, and it's well-padded on the back. However, it's a bag that is better suited to people with a small and short build. Overall, it is a great bag if you're a petite photographer who only requires a small amount of personal storage space, but it's less suitable for those with a medium or large build who need more space for personal items.





Tenba Solstice 24L Backpack

● £175 ● www.tenba.com

Hot from the factory, the Tenba Solstice 24L Backpack is one of the newest additions to Tenba's comprehensive range of camera bags. Designed with the outdoor photographer in mind, the Solstice combines a lightweight design with plenty of storage for a day's shooting outdoors.

This is, in fact, one of the deeper bags in the test and can accommodate up to a pro-spec DSLR such as a Canon EOS-1D X or Nikon D5, but is also suitable for smaller DSLRs and mirrorless cameras. The amount of kit and space for personal items sit in the middle of the group on both counts, with a near 50/50 split. There are two stretch pockets and straps on either side for carrying a tripod on one side and a bottle of water on the other, or anything else you might need quick access to. Other than these there's just one fairly large pocket on the front; all other storage is within the two main compartments inside the bag.

The waist belt is extremely small, although it does wrap around the top of the hips to help distribute weight to this area. At 1.45kg this is a super-lightweight bag, though a couple of hundred more grams for a slightly larger belt with pockets would have been a useful feature. That being said, access to the main compartment is through the top or the back of the bag, either on the floor or when held in position with the waist belt, so it's certainly versatile.

Available in black or blue, the Tenba Solstice 24L Backpack is an interesting outdoor backpack that manages to combine a generous amount of storage for personal items, alongside space for a pro-spec DSLR with a grip attached, several lenses, accessories and even a large 100mm filter system case. The bag is self-supporting and will sit upright on its waterproof bottom, and rear and top entry means you can access kit without making the back dirty. While it doesn't feel quite as well made as the MindShift or the Billingham it's not far off, and it's also the lightest bag in this round-up – a highly attractive all-rounder.



MindShift BackLight 26L

● £205 ● www.mindshiftgear.com

In recent years, MindShift has made a name for itself in outdoor photography circles with its innovative Rotation range. This is favoured by the outdoor photographer who carries more personal gear than camera kit, while the BackLight bags allow you to carry much more camera kit, but still have a generous amount of space for personal items.

The bag offers rear entry, which can be achieved with the bag face down on the floor or held on the waist using the waist belt. For the latter, there's a handy neck strap to keep the back panel open while accessing the bag. The main section allows you to carry more than enough kit for a day out shooting landscapes, and in the front pocket there are nine litres of storage, with pockets for a 15in laptop and an iPad. There's also a smaller front pocket that's ideal for thinner items such as books, maps, etc.

Customisation of the inner dividers is limited compared to some of the other bags in the test because the smaller dividers are sized to fit the configuration that the bag is shipped in. The way to resolve this would be if the main two rigid dividers didn't run the full length of the bag, although this would reduce the overall rigidity. However, with the configuration the bag ships in you can fit up to a pro-spec DSLR with a lens attached but without a grip, several lenses, accessories and a large 100mm filter system case if you need to – it works perfectly straight away.

When you use the MindShift BackLight 26L you can immediately see that a lot of thought has gone into the design of the bag. Not only is it comfortable to wear, but it also has a good balance of storage for camera gear and personal items. The nine-litre front pocket and smaller pocket can carry a surprising amount of personal items, while the two side pockets will carry large water bottles or even a tripod. This is despite having a dedicated tripod attachment on the front of the bag. With great design, build quality and decent storage, the BackLight is a compelling option for anyone involved in outdoor photography.



Billingham Rucksack 25

● £350 ● www.billingham.co.uk

Billingham is best-known for producing high-quality shoulder bags with classic styling. But in recent years the company has been developing new bags to meet the requirements of a wider range of modern photographers, and the Billingham Rucksack 25 is one of these new offerings.

The Billingham is different in several ways from the other bags in the test. The first most obvious difference is its size and capacity. Being a smaller bag than the others, it doesn't have a waist belt. But this shouldn't be too much of a problem because it carries a smaller amount of kit (yet still enough to keep you shooting on a day out). Another key difference, and an advantage, is that the bag doesn't come with a rain cover – it doesn't need one – although over the zip for the main compartment you'll find a rain guard.

On the front of the bag is a front pocket with a 1.6-litre capacity, which is just about large enough to carry a down jacket and raincoat. Moving to the inside, the padding to protect your kit feels highly effective. Dividers can be removed to use the bag as a standard backpack. Space is limited but you can carry up to a pro spec DSLR with a 70-200mm attached, but no grip.

Within the bag there's also enough space for a few lenses and accessories. With the camera stored without a lens attached you could also carry a large 100mm filter system case. There's a sleeve on the inside of the main flap, but two or three zipped compartments would be more useful for storing accessories such as lens cloths and memory cards.

The Billingham Rucksack 25 isn't the most obvious contender as a bag for outdoor photographers, but with exceptional build quality and waterproofing, it's certainly up to the job. If you're in need of a small backpack with enough space to carry essential landscape kit and a few personal items, alongside classic styling, the Billingham could be just the kind of bag you're looking for. While it's an expensive bag at £350, you can nevertheless be sure that it would last a lifetime.



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Using vertical shift, I was able to get a geometrically accurate shot of Tower Bridge from low down on the Thames foreshore
Sony Alpha 7R II, 1/125sec at f/11, ISO 100

Laowa Magic Shift Converter



This unique accessory is an excellent choice for architectural photographers shooting with Sony mirrorless cameras, says **Andy Westlake**

In the four years since Sony launched its full-frame mirrorless system, it's become clear that the firm is keen to attract serious photographers. However, such users are likely to be interested in using exotic optics for specialist tasks. And, despite Sony's best efforts, it still can't match Canon or Nikon's vast lens ranges. For instance, it has no perspective-control lenses for architectural photography. This leaves an opportunity for third-party lens makers to get in on the act.

In one the most imaginative offerings we've

seen for years, Chinese firm Venus Optics has come up with an intriguing solution, in the shape of its wonderfully named 'Magic Shift Converter'. This is designed to work with wideangle SLR primes, and convert them into E-mount optics with +/- 10mm shift. For example, the firm's Laowa 12mm f/2.8 Zero-D becomes a 17mm shift lens. At £299 for the converter and £899 for the lens, this combination costs a fraction of the price of the £2,200 Canon TS-E 17mm f/4L. But, of course, you also get that 12mm f/2.8 prime

as part of the deal, in effect giving you two lenses for half the price of one.

How does it work?

Fundamentally, the Laowa Magic Shift Converter (MSC) is a 1.4x teleconverter that employs two Ultra-High-Refractive (UHR) glass elements in its five-element, four-group design. The difference is, while other teleconverters are designed for telephoto lenses, enlarging the central portion of their image circles, this one is optimised to work with wideangle lenses and expand their entire image circle from the usual 43.2mm to 60mm in diameter. This allows the converter to incorporate 10mm shift movement up or down, while still fully illuminating the sensor. As with any 1.4x teleconverter,



Here, I used downwards shift to include an expansive foreground without distorting the temple building
Sony Alpha 9, 1/40sec at f/8, ISO 100



➤ using the MSC results in a one-stop loss of light intensity, so the Laowa 12mm f/2.8 becomes a 17mm f/4 lens.

At the front of the converter is a mount to accept the lens (Canon- and Nikon-fit versions are available), while at the rear is an E mount for Sony mirrorless cameras. The shift mechanism moves this rear mount relative to the optical unit, so the converter itself always remains centred with the prime lens in front. The mount also rotates through 360° relative to the shift mechanism, with click-stops every 45°, so you can apply either vertical or horizontal shift or anything in between.

In principle, the MSC should work with any wideangle prime. But for best effect, the lens has to be sharp across the entire frame, as any optical flaws will be magnified. Curvilinear distortion must also be minimal, as otherwise images could show asymmetric

distortion, which is something that's very difficult to fix in post-processing.

Ideally, the lens needs to provide manual control of both focus and aperture. However, it's also possible to use Canon EF-mount lenses by pre-setting a suitable aperture of around f/8 to f/11, by removing the lens from an EOS DSLR body while holding down its depth-of-field preview button. I'd be surprised if Laowa didn't make some more compatible primes in the future, too; something around the 16mm mark would be especially useful.

Primarily, shift lenses are used to avoid the converging verticals seen when shooting architecture as a result of angling the camera upwards. By shifting the lens vertically relative to the sensor, they allow the camera to be kept level for geometrically accurate results.

Of course, converging verticals can easily be corrected in post-processing. But this requires

‘The converter should work with any wideangle prime’

stretching of parts of the image, which saps detail. It's also easy to end up with gaps in the corners of your corrected image file. So there are still real advantages to using a shift lens.

Build and handling

As with other recent Laowa lenses we've tested, the Magic Shift Converter feels well made, with a reassuringly sturdy metal barrel. The finely ridged ring in its centre, which operates the shift mechanism, rotates smoothly with no backlash, while a small locking knob on the side provides a degree of friction control and fixes the camera firmly in place once adjusted. The lens-mount rotation movement is also very smooth, and clicks firmly into place at its 45-degree intervals.

Venus Optics includes a tripod-mount foot in the box. This screws on to the main barrel of the MSC, meaning the camera moves relative to the mount when it's shifted. I also found this to be useful when shooting handheld; by nestling the foot in your left hand, it takes the weight of the optics off the shift mechanism, which enables smoother, more precise vertical adjustment.

Laowa 12mm f/2.8 Zero-D

I tested the MSC primarily with the Laowa 12mm f/2.8 Zero-D, so some mention needs to be made of its qualities. It's a nicely made, metal-barrelled optic that features fully manual operation and has a smooth, well-damped focus ring. The aperture ring



Despite appearances, I shot this image from ground level
Sony Alpha 7 II, 1/10sec at f/4, ISO 250

With shift



Without shift



This comparison demonstrates how using vertical shift can help to avoid ugly converging verticals

stops the seven-blade diaphragm down directly, with clicks at full-stop intervals; this makes it a pain to use with the optical viewfinder of DSLRs, but works much better with live view. Optically it's very good indeed, combining impressive sharpness with minimal distortion and low lateral chromatic aberration, which makes it ideally suited for use with the MSC. You can see how it behaves in our test data panel, alongside comparison tests of it mounted on the Magic Shift Converter.

Practical use

Perspective control lenses have a well-earned reputation for being difficult to use on SLRs, but they work very much better on mirrorless cameras, which can meter accurately and display a bright, clear viewfinder image regardless of the aperture selected or the amount of shift applied. This means that the MSC is easy to shoot handheld; simply use the viewfinder electronic level to keep the camera straight, apply shift to achieve your desired composition, and let the camera's auto-exposure do its job.

Coupled with the 12mm f/2.8 Zero-D, image quality is very good indeed. The sharpest results are achieved at marked apertures of f/8–f/11 (i.e. f/11–f/16 effective), but this is no problem as in most situations you'll be using these for depth of field anyway. I got sharp, detailed results even when using the highly demanding 42.4MP Sony Alpha 7R II; given that we're talking about a 17mm shift lens for £1,200, this is really impressive.

One thing was brought home to me, however. That is, a 17mm lens can be too extreme for photographing the exterior of buildings. With vertical shift applied to fix converging verticals, you can simply end up with extreme wideangle distortion instead. However it's great for shooting interiors, or the exteriors of really large buildings such as cathedrals.



Verdict

Not everyone needs a specialised shift lens; indeed they are pretty niche and expensive items. So the Laowa Magic Shift Converter is an excellent accessory because it takes an existing wideangle lens and turns it into a perspective-control optic for a relatively small additional investment. With the excellent Laowa 12mm f/2.8 Zero-D onboard, the resultant 17mm f/4 shift lens gives really impressive results at a fraction of the price of the Canon TS-E 17mm f/4L.

Because it's designed for Sony's full-frame mirrorless cameras, the Magic Shift Converter is also far easier to use than a shift lens on a DSLR. It works especially well with the Laowa 12mm f/2.8, and if Venus Optics could add another matched lens or two, it would end up with a uniquely useful and affordable system for serious architectural photography. As it is, the firm deserves full marks for sheer ingenuity.



Data file

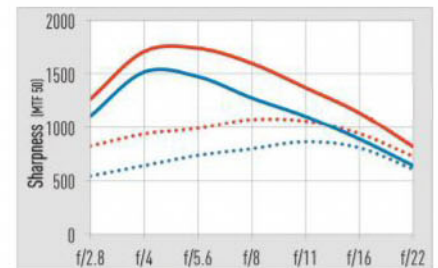
Price £299
Focal-length multiplier 1.4x
Lens elements 5
Groups 4
Length 44.1mm
Diameter 69.6mm
Weight 360g
Front mount Canon, Nikon
Camera mount Sony E (full-frame)



Laowa Magic Shift Converter

Sharpness

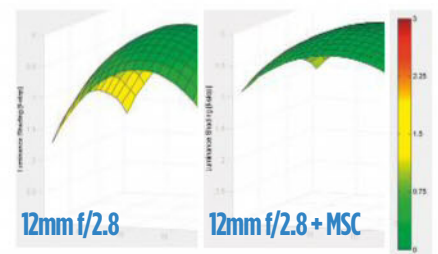
Tested on the Sony Alpha 7R II, the Laowa 12mm is exceptionally sharp in the centre when set to f/4 or smaller, with the corners being sharpest at f/8–f/11. With it mounted on the MSC, MTF50 readings diminish by 20% at these optimum apertures, indicating that the converter is doing a good job of magnifying the image without degrading it.



12mm centre — 12mm corner
 12mm + MSC centre — 12mm + MSC corner

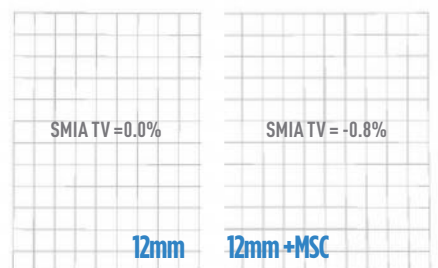
Shading

On its own, the 12mm shows considerable vignetting wide open. Add the converter and, as expected, this reduces significantly, with the device crucially adding no apparent extra vignetting of its own. But you'll still generally want to use apertures of f/8 or smaller to avoid asymmetric variations in brightness across the frame.



Curvilinear distortion

Laowa's 'Zero-D' lens genuinely lives up to its billing; there's essentially no measurable distortion, which is remarkable for such a wideangle lens. Attached to the Magic Shift Converter, we can perhaps detect a little pincushion distortion, but this certainly wasn't vexatious in normal use.



Ondu 6x6 Pocket pinhole

Andy Westlake admires a lovely wooden pinhole camera

● €160 (approx £145) ● www.ondupinhole.com

In the AP reviews team, we usually spend our time testing out all the latest and greatest digital marvels. But we're not blind to the fact that there's a film revival going on, and just occasionally, it's nice to take a step back and enjoy the simpler pleasures of analogue.

Photography doesn't get any simpler than pinhole cameras, of course. With no lens and effective apertures of f/100 or smaller, they demand exposures of several seconds at least, necessitating the use of a tripod. There's no really accurate way of framing your images, either, so composition is based as much on intuition and experience as anything else. It's a very different way of shooting.

This beautiful Ondu 6x6 Pocket pinhole is the polar opposite of the type of camera I normally use: for a start, it's made of wood. Except really I should say crafted, because it's one of the most elegantly designed and beautifully finished cameras I've ever seen. The body is hand-made from walnut, maple and ash, with a strikingly stylish two-tone finish. But what's really ingenious is that it's all stuck together using magnets, which enables Ondu to achieve such clean lines. The back is held firmly in place by magnets, as are the film-winding knobs. Even the basic wooden-bar shutter on the front is held shut with – you've guessed it – a magnet.

Indeed, this camera is such a work of art that it seems a shame to take it out and use it, for fear of marking the perfect finish. But of course, I can't review a camera without using it. Loading the film is simplicity itself, at least if you have some experience of 120 film. Tuck the leader into the left-side spool, wind it on a bit then close the back, and keep winding until frame number one appears in the red window. Then simply flip the shutter up to expose, wait a few seconds, close it again and wind on. With no interlock between the shutter and film wind it's easy to get double-exposures and blank frames, so you have to either establish a system to avoid this, or embrace the serendipity it brings.

Verdict

It's not often that I come across a camera so unusual, yet so perfectly realised as this one. It's expensive for what it is, but you're paying for impeccable materials and finish. What's more, I've also really enjoyed the results. Sure, it's an extravagance, but one you may find delivers little doses of happiness for many years to come.



Angle markings

The horizontal and vertical field of view is indicated by lines on the top and side

Tripod socket

A standard 1/8in socket is placed centrally in the base

Spirit level

A bubble level embedded in the top of the camera helps keep your horizons level.

At a glance

- Ultra-wideangle pinhole
- f/125 equivalent aperture
- 12 6x6 frames on 120 film
- Measures 139x103x49mm

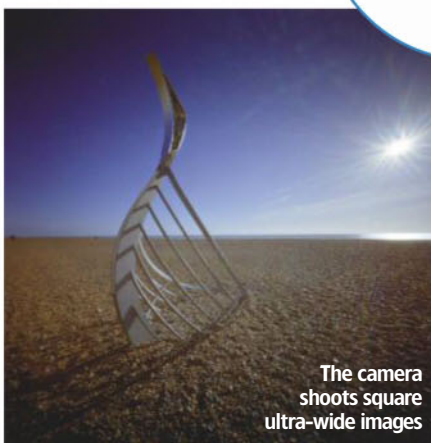
Red window

Film winding and frame counting is carried out using a window in the back of the camera.

Carry bag

The camera is supplied with a simple drawstring protective bag.

Amateur Photographer
Testbench
Recommended
★★★★★



The camera shoots square ultra-wide images

ONDU CAMERAS

Ondu makes its pinhole cameras in a wide range of sizes, although all to the same basic pattern. Smallest is the 35mm Pocket pinhole for €120, while the largest accepts 8x10 sheet film and costs €329. All can be bought direct from Ondu's website, with free shipping to the UK.

TechSupport

Email your questions to: ap@timeinc.com, Twitter @AP_Magazine and #AskAP, or Facebook. Or write to Technical Support, Amateur Photographer Magazine, Time Inc. (UK), Pinehurst 2, Pinehurst Road, Farnborough Business Park, Farnborough, Hants GU14 7BF

Sensor size and lens bulk

Q Like a growing number of photographers, I'm looking at downsizing. I currently use a Nikon D700, which is a hefty full-frame DSLR. I can see that there is a useful reduction in size and weight compared to an APS-sensor D7500: 135.5x104x72.5mm and 720g compared to the D700, which is 147x123x77mm and 995g. The D700 weight is minus the battery, while the D7500 weight includes the battery. Then compare, for example, a Nikkor DX 18-200 f/3.5-5.6 with a Nikkor 28-300 f/3.5-5.6, and the DX lens is significantly smaller and lighter. But what I don't get is that a comparable lens for a mirrorless APS-C body is smaller and lighter still. The AF-S DX Nikkor 18-140mm f/3.5-5.6G ED VR is 78x97mm and 490g, while a Sony E 18-135mm F3.5-5.6 OSS is 67.2x88mm and just 325g. Both lenses are practically the same from a photography point of view and are for APS-C bodies, but there is a big difference in size and weight. I can understand why a smaller format sensor means smaller (and lighter) lenses of equivalent aperture range and field of view, but what is the reason for comparable mirrorless lenses to be even smaller and lighter when they share the same sensor size? Is there a catch?

Sam Livesey

A There is no trickery. A key advantage of mirrorless camera systems is the ability to place the lens much closer to the sensor plane (flange/back distance) thanks to the absence of a mirror box. The optics with a mirrorless camera, put simply, need to do less work projecting what you're photographing onto the sensor. So the optical design uses a shorter and smaller diameter arrangement of lens elements. This advantage is a little less pronounced with telephoto lenses and much more significant with wideangle lenses. Specific models may have bulkier barrels, but in terms of optics, the closer you can get to the sensor the less bulky the optics can be.

Finding a new home for my darkroom gear?

Q Some 30 years ago I was determined to return to my teenage hobby, and undertake all film and printing processes, and maybe try colour printing too. I also intended to go for a 2¼ square as well as 35mm, buying two such cameras to do so. I spent a lot of time (and money) putting together a Meopta colour drawer enlarger with all the accoutrements including top-quality lenses appropriate for both mediums. However, job change demands prevented this from happening, and now it never will. They are predominantly boxed and carefully stored, but how do I find an enthusiast who will welcome this? You used to do private advertising aeons ago, so that leaves eBay, which I view with horror. I do not want to split it up! Have you any suggestions please?

Martin P



Mirrorless lenses tend to be light and small

Is the Techart AF adapter worth it?

Q Having a Sony Alpha 6500 with adapters to fit my manual focus Contax/Yashica lenses, I was amazed to see you mention the Techart autofocus adapter which could be very useful. Have you, or are you, going to test this? What quality are the results? Are there any downsides and is it only available from the USA? If so, what surcharges would it attract?

Martin Pagett



The Techart adapter works well on the Alpha 7 II

A Andy Westlake tested the Techart PRO Leica M - Sony E autofocus adapter in the AP 18 March 2017 issue. The review is available online on the AP website too. The adapter works quite well on the Alpha 7 II, although you need to ensure you have reasonably up-to-date firmware installed (v3.10 or later). The main limitations are that AF isn't especially fast, and that the 4.5mm focus travel it provides is only fully sufficient for lenses up to about 50mm. With longer lenses you have to roughly prefocus first, then use the AF to fine-tune the focus. Therefore, you don't get the same functionality and performance that you would using a native AF lens, but you will probably find it easier to get the most out of your C/Y mount lenses. The adapter is sold in the UK; for example, you can buy it from Amazon (currently listed as around £350).

A Sadly, I have heard many stories about really sophisticated darkroom gear ending up at the local tip because nobody wanted it. That was a while ago, and the more positive side of my character wonders if the initial glut of redundant darkroom equipment has now gone, leaving any remaining to have more tangible appeal. Film photography is also showing signs of a limited revival. I have these suggestions: first, try contacting a local camera club.

You could also try offering your items to a high school that runs A-Level photography courses. I doubt the school itself would need another enlarger, but a student might. eBay is certainly an option, but if that isn't for you, a classified ads site like Gumtree makes selling or giving away items much simpler, although this is best for takers/buyers who are local to you. Maybe one of our readers could be interested!

Q&A compiled by Ian Burley



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JUNE 2018

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The Komaflex-S is one of a very few SLRs made for 4x4cm images on 127 film

Here, the Komaflex-S is fitted with its wideangle auxiliary lens with the telephoto adapter beside it



BLAST FROM THE PAST

Komaflex-S

John Wade examines a rare and ultra-small roll film single lens reflex camera

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IF YOU are buying a classic camera to use, the sensible option is to go for a 35mm or a 120 roll film model. But a quick search of the internet will reveal places where you can still buy 127 film, opening up a new set of options. The Komaflex-S is one of the best.

Manufactured by the Japanese Kowa Optical Works and made with an attractive grey leatherette covering, the Komaflex shoots 4x4cm images, 12 to a roll of 127. A waist-level viewfinder screen under a fold-up hood incorporates a focusing magnifier, while an opening flap in the front of the hood lines up with a rear eyepiece for use at eye level.

The Kowa 65mm f/2.8 lens is fixed, but you can find telephoto and wideangle adapters that screw to the front. Shutter speeds run 1-1/500sec.

Film wind is by a short, stubby knob with a hook at the top, making it easy to operate with the right thumb. It incorporates a film-type reminder. Focus, shutter speeds and apertures are all set around the lens.



Top view of the camera with the viewfinder magnifier in position

The shooting sequence involves first winding the film, which also lowers the reflex mirror. This doubles as a shield to protect light from reaching the film, as the shutter is now opened and tensioned by a radial lever to one side of the lens. That's when the image first appears on the focusing screen. As the shutter button is pressed, the aperture closes from wide open to its preselected setting; next, the shutter closes, the mirror moves up, and then the shutter opens and closes again for the exposure.

A word of warning: if testing a Komaflex-S without a loaded film, the shutter must not be tensioned without first pulling back a tiny lever beside the film wind knob to disengage the shutter interlock system. Failing to do so can damage the intricate mechanism.

What's good Small and light, auxiliary lens options, good quality 4x4cm negatives.

What's bad Danger of damaging shutter mechanism, leatherette prone to cracking.

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CANON 430 EX II.....	MINT- £39.00
CANON 580EX MK II SPEEDLITE + MANUAL.....	MINT CASED £175.00
CANON 580EX MK II SPEEDLITE.....	MINT BOXED £195.00
CANON 580 EX SPEEDLITE.....	EXC++ BOXED £125.00
CANON 580 EX SPEEDLITE.....	MINT-BOXED £168.00
CANON 580 EX SPEEDLITE.....	MINT-BOXED £110.00
CANON 580 EX SPEEDLITE.....	EXC++CASED £75.00
CANON ST-22 SPEEDLITE TRANSMITTER.....	MINT BOXED £125.00
CANON BG-E11 GRIP FOR 5D MK II.....	MINT BOXED £175.00
CANON BG-E7 BATTERY GRIP FOR EOS 7D.....	MINT BOXED £68.00
CANON BG-E4 BATTERY GRIP FOR EOS 5D.....	MINT BOXED £49.00
FLUJ X PRO 1 BODY WITH GRIP CHARGER AND 3 BATT'S.....	MINT- £345.00
FLUJ X PRO 1 HANDGRIP GENUINE FLUJ.....	MINT-BOXED £69.00
FLUJ 18mm 12 FLUJINOR FOR X PRO ETC.....	MINT £295.00
FLUJ 18 - 55mm 12.8/4-R LM OIS XF FLUJINOR (NEW).....	MINT CASED £475.00
FLUJ 18 - 55mm 12.8/4-R LM OIS XF FLUJINOR + HOOD.....	MINT- £375.00
FLUJ 50-230mm 14.5/6.7 OIS XC LENS FOR X PRO ETC.....	MINT BOXED £225.00
FLUJ TOL-X100 TELECONVERTER FOR X100/100s etc.....	MINT BOXED £195.00
LEICA X VARIO TYPE 107 + HANDGRIP & FINGER LOOP.....	MINT BOXED £1,275.00
NIKON D610 BODY COMPLETE ONLY 696 ACTUATIONS.....	MINT BOXED £765.00
NIKON D500 BODY AS NEW ONLY 8640 ACTUATIONS.....	MINT BOXED £1,175.00
NIKON D3S BODY COMPLETE.....	EXC++BOXED £995.00
NIKON D2S BODY COMPLETE.....	EXC++BOXED £595.00
NIKON D40 BODY COMPLETE.....	MINT BOXED £125.00
SIGMA EM-140 DG NA - ITTL MACRO FLASH.....	MINT BOXED £225.00
SIGMA EF 610 DG SUPER FLASH NIKON FIT.....	MINT BOXED £95.00
SIGMA EF-530 DG DT ELECTRONIC FLASH ITTL NIKON FIT.....	MINT BOXED £75.00
OLYMPUS OM-D-5 DIGITAL WITH 12 - 50EZ ED LENS.....	MINT BOXED £395.00
OLYMPUS OM-D-5LSD-6 GRIP FOR OM-D 5 etc.....	MINT BOXED £89.00
PANASONIC 45-200mm 14.5/6 LUMIX G VARIO M 4/3RDS.....	MINT BOXED £199.00
OLYMPUS 50mm F2 MACRO ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 4/3RDS.....	MINT BOXED £225.00
OLYMPUS 40 - 150mm F3.5/4.5 ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 4/3RDS.....	MINT + HOOD £99.00
OLYMPUS 70 - 300mm F4.5/6 ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 4/3RDS MINT + HOOD.....	MINT BOXED £199.00
OLYMPUS DIGITAL EX - 25 EXTENSION TUBE 25MM.....	MINT £95.00
OLYMPUS FL-14 FLASH UNIT.....	MINT CASED £75.00
PANASONIC G2 BODY COMPLETE WITH ALL ACCESS.....	MINT BOXED £145.00
SONY 18 - 250mm 13.5/6.3 A/F DT LENS.....	MINT BOXED £395.00
SIGMA 30mm 28 F2.8 DN MICRO 4/3RDS.....	MINT BOXED £115.00
SONY 16mm 12.8 FISH-EYE FOR ALPHA.....	MINT BOXED £545.00
SONY 20mm 12.8 WIDE ANGLE FOR ALPHA.....	MINT BOXED £399.00
SONY 500mm 18 REFLEX LENS WITH FILTERS.....	MINT BOXED £399.00
SONY ECM - 121ST1M STEREO MICROPHONE.....	NEW UNUSED £99.00
METZ 44AF1 FLASH UNIT FOR SONY DSLR.....	MINT BOXED £95.00
SONY DSC-HX90V COMPLETE VERY LOW USE.....	MINT BOXED £275.00

Canon Autofocus, Digital Lenses, Canon FD

CANON 14mm 12.8 USM "L".....	MINT-BOXED £795.00
CANON 24mm 11.2 USM "L".....	MINT- £499.00
CANON 85mm 11.2 USM "L" MK II LATEST MODEL.....	MINT CASED £899.00
CANON 85mm 11.2 USM "L" MK II LATEST MODEL.....	MINT BOXED £1,095.00
CANON 100mm 12.8 USM "L" MACRO IMAGE STABILIZER.....	EXC++ £595.00
CANON 300mm 14 USM "L" IMAGE STABILIZER.....	MINT BOXED AS NEW £995.00
CANON 300mm 14 USM "L" IMAGE STABILIZER.....	MINT CASED £825.00
CANON 300mm 14 USM "L" IMAGE STABILIZER MK1.....	MINT CASED £3,750.00
CANON 8 - 15mm 14 USM "L" FISHEYE.....	MINT CASED £799.00
CANON 16 - 35mm 12.8 USM "L" MK 2.....	MINT BOXED £875.00
CANON 18 - 35mm 14 USM "L" LATEST.....	MINT-HOOD £995.00
CANON 17 - 40mm 14 USM "L" + HOOD.....	MINT CASED £359.00
CANON 24 - 70mm 12.8 USM "L" IS LATEST + HOOD.....	MINT CASED £525.00
CANON 28 - 70mm 12.8 USM "L".....	EXC++ £399.00
CANON 28 - 70mm 12.8 USM "L".....	MINT- £495.00
CANON 28 - 80mm 12.8/4 USM "L".....	EXC++CASED £375.00
CANON 24 - 105mm 14 USM "L" IMAGE STABILIZER.....	EXC++BOXED £325.00
CANON 24 - 105mm 14 USM "L" IMAGE STABILIZER.....	MINT CASED £465.00
CANON 70 - 200mm 14 USM "L" IMAGE STABILIZER.....	MINT BOXED £795.00
CANON 70 - 200mm 12.8 USM "L".....	MINT BOXED £699.00
CANON 80 - 200mm 12.8 USM "L" USM WITH HOOD.....	MINT BOXED £499.00
CANON 100 - 400 "L" USM IMAGE STABILIZER.....	MINT-BOXED £575.00
CANON 24mm 12.8 EF-S STM PANCAKE LENS.....	MINT BOXED £110.00
CARL ZEISS 50mm 11.4 PLANAR T* WITH HOOD.....	MINT £375.00
CANON 20mm 12.8 USM.....	EXC++ £245.00
CANON 40mm 12.8 STM PANCAKE LENS.....	MINT £129.00
CANON 50mm 11.8 MARK 1 (VERY RARE NOW).....	MINT £129.00
CANON 60mm 12.8 EFS USM MACRO LENS.....	MINT- £295.00
CANON 85mm 11.8 USM.....	MINT £275.00
CANON 100mm 12 USM.....	MINT £275.00
CANON 100mm 12 USM.....	EXC++ £215.00
CANON 100mm 12.8 MACRO.....	EXC++ £195.00
CANON 10 - 22mm 13.5/4.5 USM.....	EXC++ £345.00
CANON 10 - 22mm 13.5/4.5 USM.....	MINT BOXED £375.00
CANON 17 - 55mm 12.8 EFS IS USM WITH HOOD.....	MINT £499.00
CANON 18 - 55mm 13.5/5.6 MK II.....	MINT £59.00
CANON 18 - 135mm 13.5/5.6 EF-S IMAGE STABILIZER.....	MINT £325.00
CANON 18 - 200mm 13.5/5.6 EF-S IMAGE STABILIZER.....	MINT-HOOD £295.00
CANON 28 - 105mm 13.5/4.5 USM.....	MINT BOXED £125.00
SONY 55 - 250mm 14.5/5.6 STM IS LATEST.....	MINT BOXED £199.00
CANON 70 - 300mm 14.5/5.6 USM IMAGE STABILIZER.....	MINT £299.00
CANON 75 - 300mm 14.5/5.6 MKII USM.....	MINT £399.00
CANON 75 - 300mm 14.5/5.6 MKII USM.....	MINT BOXED £399.00
CANON ANGLE FINDER, C COMPLETE.....	MINT BOXED £799.00
KENCO DG CANON FIT TUBE SET 12,20,36MM.....	MINT BOXED £99.00

CANON EF 1.4X EXTENDER MK I.....	EXC £95.00
CANON EF 2.0X EXTENDER MK I.....	MINT BOXED £129.00
CANON EF 2.0X EXTENDER MK II.....	MINT CASED £185.00
KENCO DG CANON FIT TUBE SET 12,20,36MM.....	MINT- £99.00
SIGMA EX 1.4 APO DG TELECONVERTER.....	MINT £125.00
CANON TC-80N3 REMOTE RELEASE/TIMER FOR EOS.....	MINT BOXED £75.00
SAMYANG 85mm 11.5 AS IF MC CANON EOS FIT.....	MINT CASED £175.00
SIGMA 4.5mm 12.8 EX DC HSM CIRCULAR FISHEYE.....	MINT CASED £475.00
SIGMA 10mm 12.8 EX DC FISHEYE HSM.....	MINT BOXED £345.00
SIGMA 14mm 12.8 EX HSM ASPHERIC.....	MINT CASED £365.00
SIGMA 105mm 12.8 MACRO EX WITH CASE.....	MINT £179.00
SIGMA 105mm 12.8 MACRO EX DG OS HSM.....	MINT- £279.00
SIGMA 150mm 12.8 EX DG-OS HSM MACRO LATEST.....	MINT BOXED £595.00
SIGMA 12 - 24mm 14.5/5.6 DG HSM MK II.....	MINT CASED £475.00
SIGMA 15 - 30mm 14.5/4.5 EX DG ASPHERIC.....	MINT-BOXED £199.00
SIGMA 17 - 35mm 12.8/4 EX HSM ASPHERIC.....	MINT- £179.00
SIGMA 18 - 50mm 12.8 EX DC SLD GLASS.....	MINT-BOXED £165.00
SIGMA 18 - 250mm 13.5/6.3 EX DC SLD GLASS.....	MINT BOXED £199.00
SIGMA 50 - 150mm 12.8 EX APO HSM AF-DC MK II.....	MINT- £325.00
SIGMA 70 - 200mm 12.8 EX DG HSM OS LATEST.....	MINT- £395.00
SIGMA 120 - 400mm 14/5.6 APO DG HSM OS.....	MINT BOXED £475.00
TAMRON 180mm 13.5 AF SP DI MACRO LATEST.....	MINT CASED £199.00
TAMRON 500mm 18 HYPOR LENS & FILTERS FO MOUNT.....	MINT CASED £175.00
TAMRON 28 - 75mm 2.8 X2 3X DI LENS LATEST.....	MINT £345.00
TAMRON 28 - 300mm 13.5/5.6 IF LD DI ASP WB CONTROL.....	MINT BOXED £375.00
TOKINA 10 - 17mm 12.8/4.5 ATX DX FISHEYE LATEST.....	MINT BOXED £279.00
TOKINA 11 - 16mm 12.8 ATX - PRO ASPHERICAL.....	MINT BOXED £279.00
LENSBABY COMPOSER WITH 0.42 SUPER WIDE.....	MINT CASED £99.00

Contax 'G' Compacts & SLR & Ricoh

CONTAX 28mm 12.8 BIDOGN "H" HOOD FILTER CAP BL.....	MINT CASED £299.00
CONTAX 35 - 70mm 13.5/6.1 "G" VARIO-SUNNAR T.....	MINT BOXED £395.00
CONTAX TLA 140 FLASH FOR G1/G2.....	MINT CASED £65.00
CONTAX G01 DATABASE FOR CONTAX T3.....	MINT-BOXED £69.00
CONTAX TLA 200 FLASH FOR CONTAX T3.....	MINT CASED £99.00
CONTAX CARL ZEISS 28mm 12.8.....	MINT BOXED £199.00
CONTAX 50mm 11.7 AE LENS.....	MINT £95.00
CARL CARL ZEISS 85mm 12.8 AE.....	MINT BOXED £265.00
CONTAX 300mm F4 TITEL TESSAR MM.....	MINT BOXED £295.00
CONTAX TLA 140 FLASH.....	MINT CASED £45.00
CONTAX TLA 280 FLASH.....	MINT- £59.00
CONTAX TLA 280 FLASH UNIT.....	MINT BOXED £75.00

LEICA "M", "R", & SCREW & RANGEFINDER

LEICA M6 TTL CHROME WITH LEICA LEATHER CASE.....	MINT- CASED £1,395.00
LEICA X VARIO TYPE 107 + HANDGRIP & FINGER LOOP.....	MINT BOXED £1,275.00
LEICA M9 BLACK BODY TOTALLY AS.....	NEW MINT BOXED £1,395.00
LEICA M4P BLACK (STILL WRAPPED IN BOX) OPENED.....	MINT BOXED £999.00
LEICA M1R METER BLACK BODY.....	MINT- £295.00
LEICA MDA BODY SER N 12659X3 CIRCA 1970.....	MINT- £425.00
LEICA MDA BODY SER N 141111 XKCIRCA 1975-76.....	EXC++ £399.00
LEICA IIC BODY WITH CASE.....	EXC++ £195.00
LEICA IIC RED BLIND RARE.....	EXC++ £345.00
LEICA CL BODY.....	EXC++ £365.00
MINOLTA 28mm 12.8 M ROKKOR FOR CLE / CL LEICA M.....	EXC++ £375.00
LEICA 28mm 12.8 ELMARIT BLAC WITH HOOD.....	MINT- £995.00
LEICA 40mm 12.8 SUMMICRON C FOR CLE / CL FOR M.....	MINT- £395.00
LEICA 35mm 13.5 SUMMARON M WITH LEICA FILTER.....	MINT- £325.00
LEICA 5cm 12.8 CIL ELMAR.....	MINT- £295.00
LEICA 50mm 12 COLLAPSIBLE SUMMICRON.....	MINT £375.00
LEICA 50mm 12 CLOSE FOCUS SUMMA + SPECS.....	EXC++ £595.00
LEICA 50mm 12.5 SUMMARIT M LATEST 6 BIT.....	MINT BOXED AS NEW £745.00
LEICA 50mm 12.8 COLLAPSIBLE ELMAR.....	MINT- £265.00
LEICA 5cm 13.5 ELMAR RED SCALE.....	MINT- £294.00
LEICA 90mm 14 ELMAR C FOR CLE / CL LEICA M.....	MINT- £295.00
LEICA 90mm 14 ELMAR M MOUNT.....	MINT- £165.00
LEICA 135mm 12.8 ELMARIT M 11829 WITH CASE.....	MINT BOXED £375.00
LEICA 135mm 14.5 HEKTOR.....	EXC++ £75.00
VOIGTLANDER 25mm 14 SNAPSHOT SPKORAR SCREW.....	EXC++ £125.00
VOIGTLANDER 35mm 12.5 MC COL SKO WITH M RING.....	MINT £275.00
VOIGTLANDER BESSA L BODY CHROME.....	MINT £129.00
VOIGTLANDER BESSA T WINDER.....	MINT BOXED £149.00
VOIGTLANDER VC METER II.....	MINT BOXED £175.00
VOIGTLANDER BESSA R GRIP FOR R2,R3,R3 ETC.....	MINT BOXED £49.00
LEICA 35mm 13.5 SUMMARON SCREW IN KEEPER.....	MINT- £375.00
LEICA M2/M3 BROWN LEATHER CASE WITH STRAP.....	EXC++ £65.00
LEICA 135mm 12.8 ELMARIT M WITH SPECS.....	EXC++ £299.00
LEICA 135mm 14.5 HEKTOR + HOOD M MOUNT.....	EXC++ £399.00
LEICA 135mm 14.5 HEKTOR IN KEEPER.....	EXC++ £199.00
LEICA FIT DALLMEYER 13.5CM F4.5 DALRAC.....	EXC++ £375.00
LEICA 90mm 14 ELMAR BLACK SCREW.....	EXC++ £145.00
LEICA 135mm 14.5 HEKTOR + HOOD SCREW.....	EXC++ £99.00
LEICA SF20 FLASH FOR M6 etc.....	MINT BOXED £89.00
LEICA FAVOR BLACK RANGEFINDER.....	MINT-CASED £175.00
LEICA R7 CHROME BODY.....	MINT- £365.00
LEICA R8 MOTORDRIVE 14313 & CHGR 14424.....	MINT BOXED £295.00
LEICAFLEX BODY CHROME.....	MINT- £195.00
LEICA CURTAGON 35mm 14.....	MINT-BOXED £395.00
LEICA 50mm 12 SUMMICRON 3 CAM.....	MINT- £379.00
LEICA 90mm 12.8 ELMARIT 3 CAM.....	MINT- £375.00
LEICA 180mm F4 ELMARIT R 3 CAM.....	EXC++ £345.00
SWAROVSKI EL RANGE 10x42 RANGEFINDER BINOS.....	NEW UNUSED £1,695.00
SWAROVSKI 10x42 SL HABICHT-STRAP AND COVERS.....	MINT- £565.00
LEICA 10 x 42 TRINOVID BA WITH LEATHER CASE.....	MINT- £995.00
OPTICRON 20X80 BCF BINOCULARS & TRIPOD MOUNT.....	MINT BOXED £250.00

Medium & Large Format

BRONICA ETRSI WITH 75mm PE, PRISM FOR & BACK.....	MINT £345.00
BRONICA SUB COMPLETE WITH 90mm FINDER & BACK.....	MINT £345.00
BRONICA 50mm 12.8 ZENZANON MC.....	EXC++ £99.00

BRONICA 110mm F4 MACRO LENS PS.....	MINT- £295.00
BRONICA 150mm F3.5 ZENZANON E MC.....	MINT £39.00
BRONICA 150mm F4 E.....	MINT- £69.00
BRONICA ETRSI 120 BACK.....	MINT- £69.00
BRONICA POLAROID BACK FOR ETRSI, ETRSI ETC.....	MINT BOXED £59.00
BRONICA AEI METERED PRISM.....	EXC++ £75.00
BRONICA PLAIN PRISM FOR ETRSI/ETRSI.....	MINT £75.00
BRONICA PLAIN PRISM FOR ETRSI/ETRSI.....	EXC++ £59.00
BRONICA ROTARY PRISM FINDER FOR ETRSI, ETRSI ETC.....	MINT- £75.00
BRONICA MOTOR WINDER E.....	EXC++ £99.00
BRONICA 150mm F3.5 ZENZANON S.....	MINT- £165.00
BRONICA 40mm F4 ZENZANON S ULTRA WIDE FOR SQ.....	MINT- £199.00
BRONICA 50mm 13.5 PS LENS & CASE.....	MINT-BOXED £199.00
BRONICA 65mm F4 ZENZANON PS FOR SQ.....	MINT-CASED £145.00
BRONICA 110mm F4 PS ZENZANON MACRO FOR SQ.....	MINT-CASED £365.00
BRONICA 150mm F4 PS ZENZANON FOR SQ.....	MINT-CASED £145.00
BRONICA 180mm 14.5 PS LENS & CASE.....	MINT-BOXED £199.00
BRONICA AE PRISM FINDER SQ-1 LATST MODEL.....	MINT BOXED £225.00
BRONICA PRISM ME METERED FOR SQ/SQAL.....	MINT- £39.00
BRONICA SPEED GRIP FOR SQ/SQAL.....	MINT- £99.00
BRONICA FLIMBACK SQ-2220 FOR SQ/SQAL.....	MINT BOXED £79.00
HASSELBLAD 28mm f4 HC FOR H SYSTEM.....	MINT BOXED £1,475.00
HASSELBLAD 120mm f4 HC FOR H SYSTEM.....	EXC++ £1,195.00
HASSELBLAD 303 CX BODY WITH BACK & WLF.....	MINT- £695.00
HASSELBLAD 90mm f4 FOR X PAH I & II W KEEPER.....	MINT £365.00
HASSELBLAD 150mm f4 SONNAR T* BLACK.....	EXC++ £195.00
HASSELBLAD 150mm f4 SONNAR SLR.....	MINT-BOXED £395.00
HASSELBLAD 50mm f4 DISTAGON SILVER.....	EXC++ £195.00
HASSELBLAD 50mm f4 SONNAR SILVER.....	EXC++ £175.00
HASSELBLAD 250mm f6.6 SONNAR SILVER.....	EXC++ £179.00
HASSELBLAD HTS 1.5X TLT AND FITZ ADAPTOR.....	MINT BOXED £295.00
HASSELBLAD GPS UNIT FOR H SYSTEM.....	MINT BOXED £399.00
HASSELBLAD H3 EXT TUBE.....	MINT £165.00
HASSELBLAD PM90 PRISM FINDER.....	MINT- £275.00
HASSELBLAD PME3 METERED PRISM FINDER.....	MINT- £275.00
HASSELBLAD VFC-6 METERED PRISM.....	MINT BOXED £175.00
HASSELBLAD A12 BLACK CHROME.....	MINT- £129.00
HASSELBLAD WINDER CW AND REMOTE.....	MINT £275.00
MAMIYA 6 BODY REALLY NICE CONDITION.....	MINT- £775.00
MAMIYA 150mm F4.5 "G" WITH HOOD FOR MAMIYA 6.....	MINT £365.00
MAMIYA 645 SUPER WITH AE PRISM 90mm COMPLETE.....	MINT £365.00
MAMIYA 150mm 13.5 SEIKOR C FOR 645 SUPER etc.....	MINT £145.00
MAMIYA 1645J COMPLETE WITH 90mm 12.8.....	MINT- £299.00
MAMIYA 150mm F4.5 "G" WITH HOOD FOR MAMIYA 6.....	MINT £365.00
MAMIYA 180mm F4.5 SEIKOR Z W FOR RZ.....	MINT £199.00
MAMIYA 250mm F4.5 LENS FOR RZ.....	MINT- £195.00
MAMIYA 210mm F4 SEIKOR C FOR 645.....	MINT CASED £195.00
MAMIYA 180mm F4.5 SEIKOR FOR RB.....	MINT £169.00
MAMIYA 220 BACK FOR RZ 67.....	MINT- £95.00
PENTAX 200mm F4 FOR PENTAX 67 + FILTER AND HOOD.....	MINT- £199.00
PENTAX 55mm F4 SMC FOR RZ 67.....	MINT £175.00
PENTAX 55mm F2.8 FOR PENTAX 645.....	MINT BOXED £199.00
ROLLEIFLEX SCHNEIDER 150mm F4.6 MAKRO FOR 6008.....	MINT- £575.00
YASHICAMAT 1245 COMPLETE WITH HOOD + CASE.....	MINT-CASED £375.00

Nikon Auto-Focus & Digital, Lenses Accessories

NIKON F5 BODY REALLY NICE.....	MINT-BOXED £475.00
NIKON F100 FILM BODY SUPERB.....	MINT BOXED £250.00
NIKON 10.5 12.8 "G" IF-ED AF DX FISHEYE.....	MINT BOXED £399.00
NIKON 28mm 12.8 A/F.....	EXC++ £99.00
NIKON 28mm 12.8 A/F.....	MINT £135.00
NIKON 35mm 12 A/F "D".....	MINT BOXED £195.00
NIKON 40mm 12.8 "G" DX AF-S MICRO LENS.....	MINT BOXED £179.00
NIKON 50mm 11.8 A/F "D".....	MINT BOXED £39.00
NIKON 85mm 13.5 ED DX AF-S VR MICRO NIKKOR.....	MINT-HOOD £345.00
NIKON 180mm 12.8 A/F IF-ED LENS.....	MINT- £495.00
NIKON 12 - 24mm 14 "G" IF-ED AF-S DX.....	MINT BOXED £465.00
NIKON 18 - 70mm 13.5/4.5 IF-ED AF-S ZOOM.....	MINT £125.00
NIKON 24 - 85mm 13.5/4.5 "G" IF-ED AF-S VR LENS.....	MINT £265.00
NIKON 24 - 120mm 14 "G" IF-ED AF-S VR LATEST MODEL.....	MINT CASED £745.00
NIKON 28 - 200mm 13.5/5.6 A/F D.....	EXC++ £125.00
NIKON 35 - 70mm 13.5/4.5 A/F LENS.....	EXC++ £49.00
NIKON 35 - 135mm 13.5/4.5 A/F + HOOD.....	MINT- £129.00
NIKON 70 - 200mm 12.8 ED AF-S VR.....	MINT BOXED £899.00
NIKON 70 - 200mm 12.8 ED AF-S VR II LATEST.....	MINT BOXED £1,375.00
NIKON 75 - 300mm 14.5/5.6 A/F ZOOM + TRIPOD COLL.....	MINT- £199.00
NIKON 80 - 200mm 12.8 A/F IF-ED ZOOM GREAT LENS.....	MINT- £345.00
NIKON 80 - 200mm 12.8 A/F IF-ED ZOOM GREAT LENS.....	MINT BOXED £375.00
NIKON 80 - 200mm 12.8 A/F IF-ED AF-S SILENT WAVE.....	MINT-BOXED £595.00
NIKON 80 - 400mm 14.5/5.6 "G" IF-ED AF-S VR LATEST.....	MINT BOXED £1,695.00

NIKON 200 - 500mm 15.6 ED AF-S VR LENS LATEST.....	MINT BOXED £1,075.00
NIKON TC20E II 2X AF-5 TELECONVERTER.....	MINT- £195.00
TAMRON 1.4X AF "D" TELECONVERTER NIKON FIT.....	MINT BOXED £69.00
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SIGMA 2X EX DG TELECONVERTER.....	MINT £145.00
SIGMA 24mm 1:4 DG HSM ART LENS NIKON FIT.....	MINT BOXED £495.00
SIGMA 30mm F1.4 EX DG HSM NIKON FIT.....	MINT BOXED AS NEW £191.00
SIGMA 50mm 1:2.8 EX MACRO D.....	EXC+ - £129.00
SIGMA 105mm 1:2.8 EX APO DG MACRO.....	MINT- BOXED £259.00
SIGMA 10 - 20mm 1:4.5 EX DC HSM.....	MINT BOXED £249.00
SIGMA 15 - 30mm 1:3.5/4.5 EX DG FULL FRAME.....	MINT- £225.00
SIGMA 50 - 500mm F4.5/6.3 DG HSM OPT/STAB OS.....	MINT- BOXED £699.00
SIGMA 70 - 300mm 1:4.5 EX DG MACRO D5300 COMP.....	MINT BOXED £110.00
TOKINA 12 - 24mm F4 EX D ASPHERICAL AT-X PRO.....	MINT+HOOD £229.00
TOKINA 16 - 50mm F2.8 ASPHERICAL AT-X PRO D.....	MINT BOXED £275.00
TOKINA 35mm 1:2.8 ATX PRO D MACRO 1:1 LATEST.....	MINT BOXED £259.00
TOKINA 300mm 1:2.8 AT-X PRO WITH HOOD.....	MINT- £699.00

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14mm F2.8 XF.....	E++ £499
16-55mm F2.8 R LM WR XF.....	E++ £749
18-135mm F3.5-5.6 LM OIS WR XF.....	E++ £529
18-55mm F2.8-4 R LM OIS XF.....	E++ £299 - £349
27mm F2.8 XF.....	E++ £219
35mm F1.4 XF R.....	E++ £349
50-140mm F2.8 WR OIS XF.....	Mint- £1,049
50-230mm F4.5-6.7 OIS XC - Black.....	E++ £239
50-230mm F4.5-6.7 OIS XC - Silver.....	Mint- £239
50mm F2.8 Macro Touit - Zeiss.....	E++ £549
55-200mm F3.5-4.8 OIS.....	Mint- £449
56mm F1.2 R XF.....	E++ £649
60mm F2.4 XF R OIS.....	E+ / E++ £299 - £349

Micro 4/3rds Olympus

12-40mm F2.8 M.Zuiko.....	E++ / Mint- £529 - £549
12-50mm F3.5-6.3 M.Zuiko.....	Mint- £139
12mm F2 ED M.Zuiko - Silver.....	Mint- £429
14-42mm F3.5-5.6 EZ M.Zuiko.....	Mint- £139 - £149
14-42mm F3.5-5.6 M.Zuiko II R.....	E++ £75
17mm F1.8 M.Zuiko - Black.....	Mint- £269
17mm F1.8 M.Zuiko - Silver.....	Mint- £269
40-150mm F2.8 M.Zuiko Pro.....	E++ / Mint- £879 - £949
40-150mm F4-5.6 R ED M.Zuiko.....	E++ £99
60mm F2.8 ED Macro M.Zuiko.....	E++ £289
75-300mm F4.8-6.7 ED II M.Zuiko.....	E++ £279
75mm F1.8 ED Black M.Zuiko.....	E+ / Mint- £479 - £519
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7-14mm F4 G Vario.....	E++ / Mint- £529 - £549
12-35mm F2.8 G X Vario OIS.....	E+ / E++ £469 - £489
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35-100mm F2.8 II G X Vario Power OIS.....	Mint- £699
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24-70mm F4 FE ZA OSS.....	E+ / Mint- £549 - £669
24mm F1.4 ED AS UMC Samyang.....	E++ £279
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50mm F1.2 AS UMC FE Samyang.....	Mint- £199
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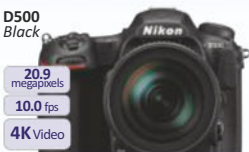
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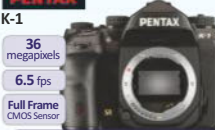
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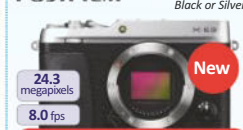
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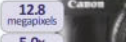


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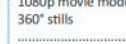
4K movie mode and 360° stills



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Theta S Digital Spherical Camera

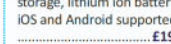
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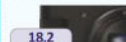
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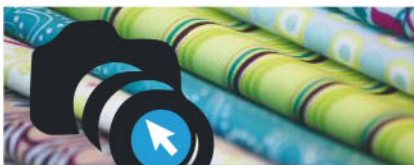
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Final Analysis

Roger Hicks considers...

'Mother and daughter at Sloane Square', 2017, by Luke Agbaimoni



Our appreciation of any picture is a blend of the personal and the universal. Imagine five portraits: a lover, a friend, an acquaintance, someone long forgotten, and a stranger. We see different things in each, but still share a common humanity.

Then think of the settings, the contexts. These too carry their freight and can be more or less specific, more or less universal. The London Underground, the Moscow or Paris metro, the New York subway, the U-Bahn in Berlin: all are different, but anyone who has experienced any of them can see the specific and the universal. We are all people; they are all underground mass transit systems.

Shared experience is the basis of humanist reportage, and this is the very heart of Luke Agbaimoni's pictures on www.tubemapper.com. People and

settings interact wonderfully, often creating the strange impression that we are remembering something we have never seen, or perhaps something we would have seen had we been paying attention. Mass transit is a strange blend of togetherness (we really are all in it together) and isolation (but we rarely talk to one another). Elegance and cleanliness are interspersed with dilapidation and filth. Past and future mingle promiscuously.

Specific and universal

In this picture, I love the mother and child (specific, but also universal), the rich blue of the tiles (specific), and the blur of the train (all but universal, except in those rare stations where the train doors line up with holes in a barrier). I don't really recall Sloane Square station: it is nearly 40 years since I lived on King's Road. But even if it

has all changed, it is still the same.

You don't get pictures like this by accident. At least, not often. You need to experiment with shutter speed and aperture to create the appropriate blur and depth of field. You need to be able to concentrate and exclude the unnecessary; you need to practise. You need to know when to wait and when to grab the shot.

If I owned the right sort of hotel/pub/restaurant in London, I'd buy original prints from this series to hang on the walls, and if I could get Luke's permission I'd sell them too, as prints and postcards. Crass commerce? If you like, but also a compliment. As I get older, I like cities less and less. But this series makes me want to go back to London. Indeed I am half tempted to have one of them on the wall in my house in rural France, to remind me of a life I used to live.

Roger Hicks has been writing about photography since 1981 and has published more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife Frances Schultz (visit his new website at www.rogerandfrances.eu). Every week in this column Roger deconstructs a classic or contemporary photograph. Next week he considers an image by Hamish Gill.



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